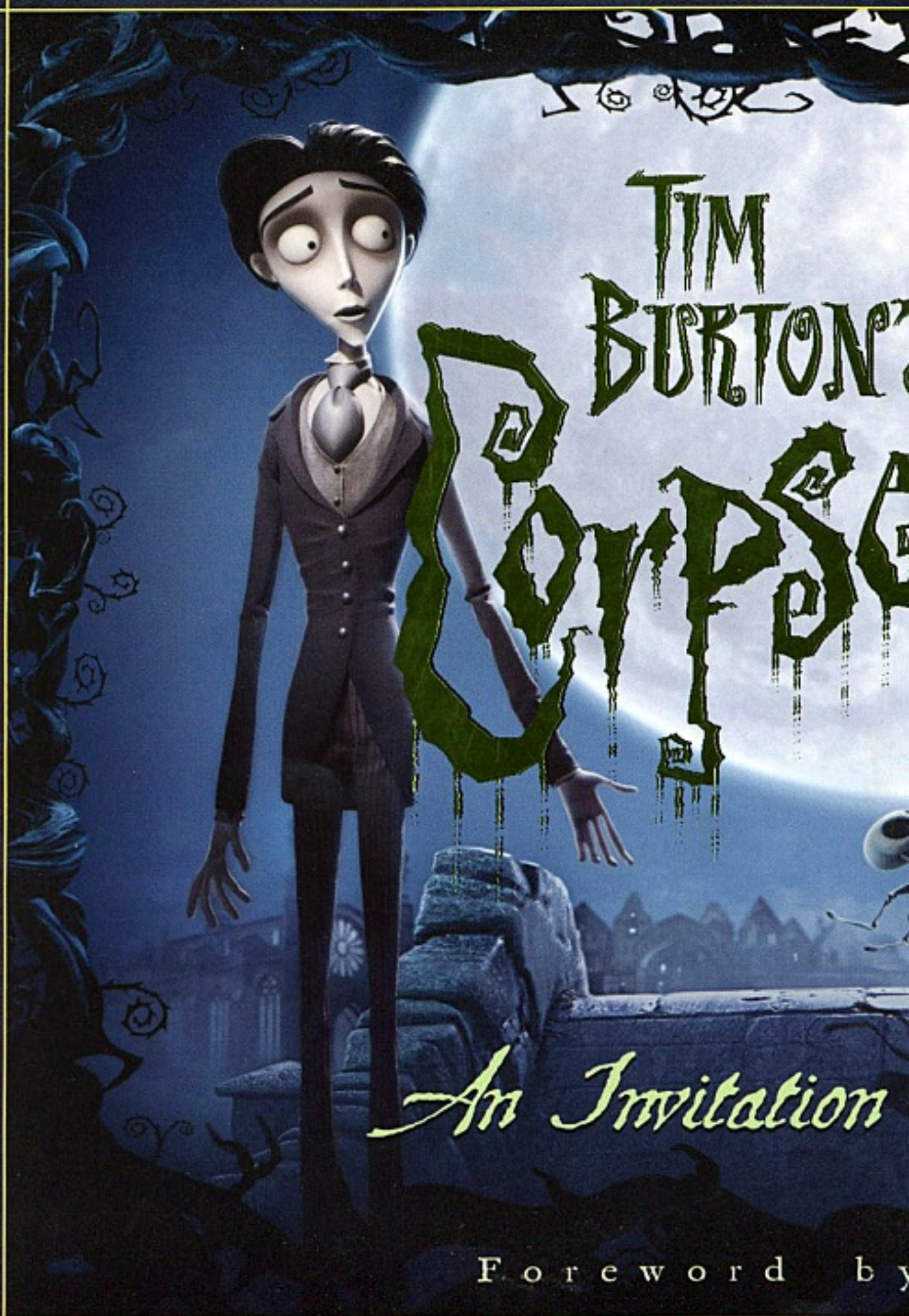
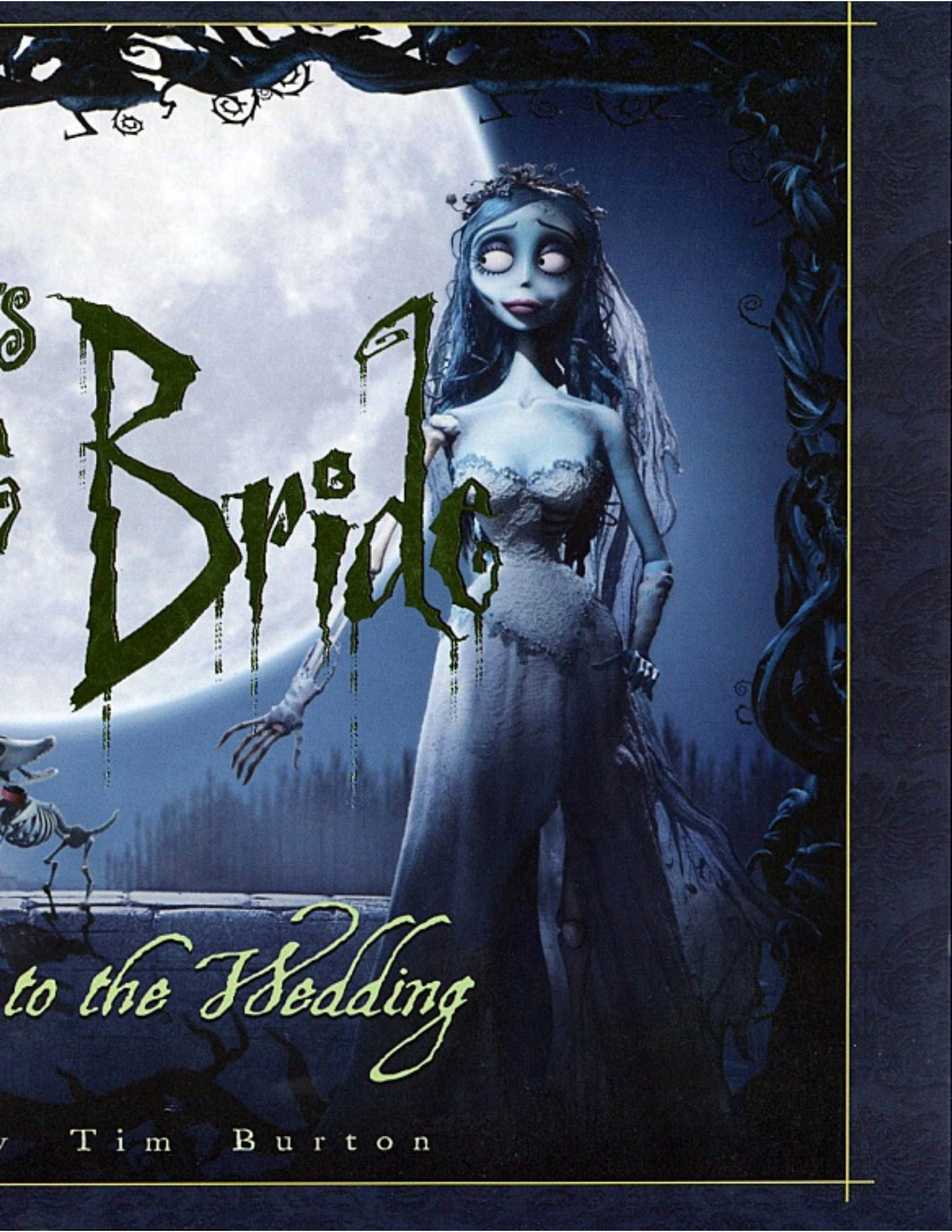


Tim Burton's CORPSE BRIDE *An Invitation to the Wedding*



Foreword by



The Corpse Bride

to the Wedding

by Tim Burton

TIM
BURTON'S
Corpse
An Invitation to

Bride
the Wedding





TIM
BURTON'S
Corpse

An Invitation to



NEWMAN

Bride

to the Wedding



MARKET PRESS



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F O R E W O R D

There's Going



rowing up, watching monster mo
Harryhausen's work: *Jason and t*
films, *20 Million Miles to Earth*.
knew any actor's name. Ray was

cial artist and, watching his films, I could always
his work. Like a lot of people, I was inspired b
today in part because of him. Watching his film

artistry, of the skill, and of

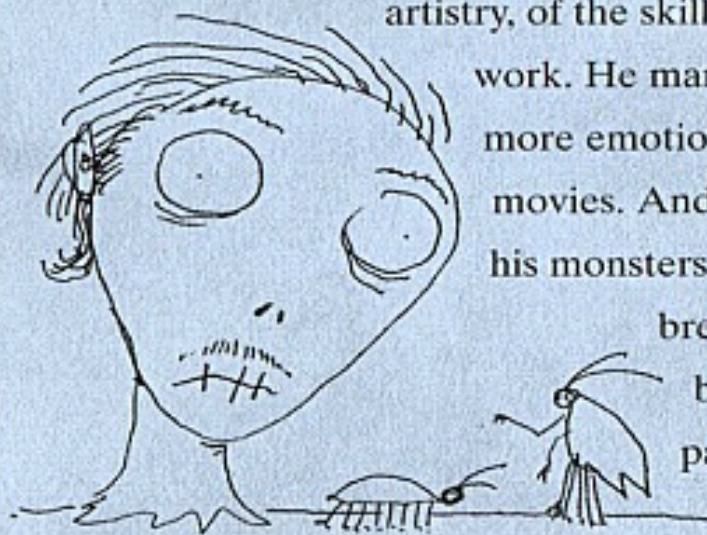
work. He managed to
more emotion than m
movies. And if they
his monsters a great

breath and

bad for t

pain have

catha



OPPOSITE: *The Corpse Bride* accepts her ows. A

RIGHT: Tim Burton on set.

D

to Be a Wedding

by Tim Burton

ovies, I became a huge fan of Ray

the Argonauts, the Sinbad

I knew his name before I

and remains, a very spe-

ys feel the artistry behind

y him and am where I am

ns you were aware of the

the love he put into his

o imbue his monsters with

most of the actors in those

didn't have a character, then he always gave

death scene. They always had one final dying

one final shake of the tail, and you always felt

them. Growing up, watching these monsters in

their own tragic death was, in a way, a form of

rsis for my adolescent self.

ABOVE: Burton's sketch of Paul the Head Waiter.



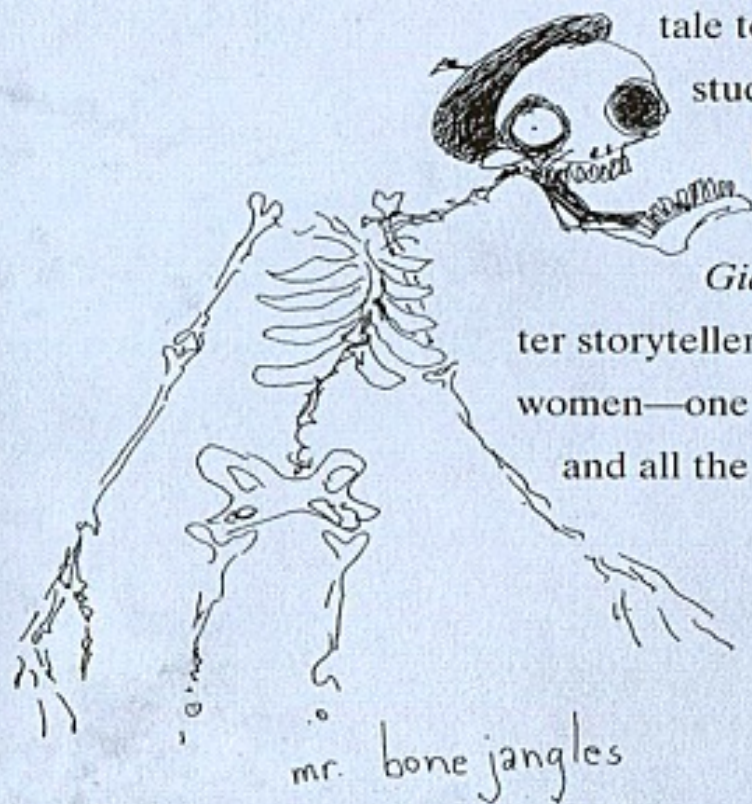




F O R E



When we were doing *Corpse Bride* to meet Ray. Johnny Depp, He and it was the most wonderful lucky in my life to have been watched my whole life who have Price, Christopher Lee, and Mickey case they have all turned out to be special people. Ray was no exception very special moment when he came *Corpse Bride*. (I don't think much

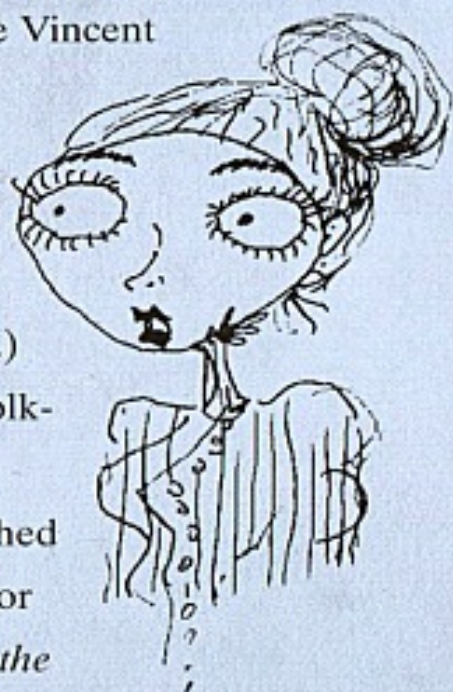


The idea for *Corpse Bride* was a tale told to me by my friend Joe Ranft on his student days at Cal Arts. Joe, who directed the movie, had worked at Disney on both *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Giant Peach*, and had then worked as a better storyteller and when he told me this little story about two women—one living, one dead—he knew it would be a hit and all the amazing artists who worked on the

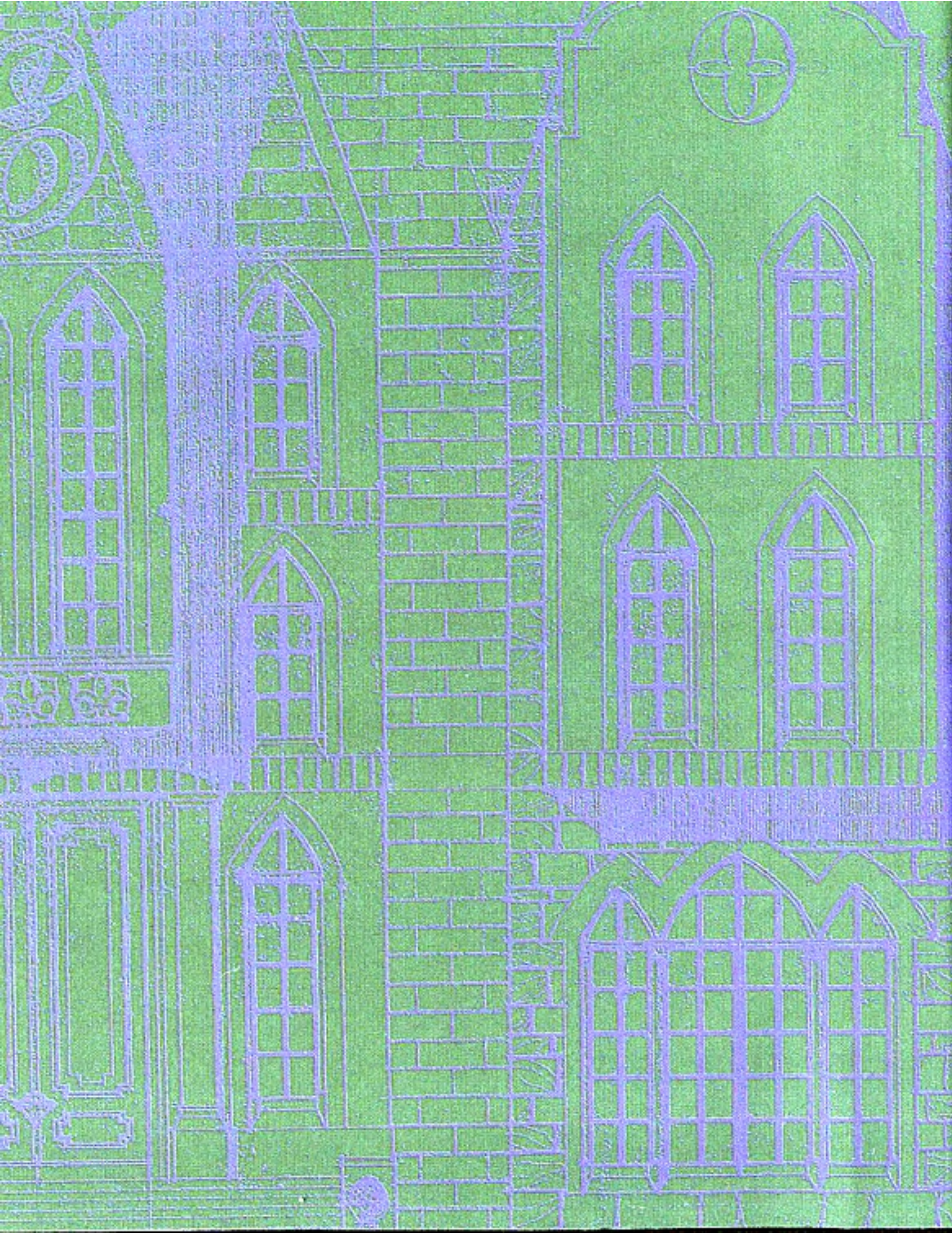
OPPOSITE: Watercolor sketches of Victor and Corpse Bride

W O R D

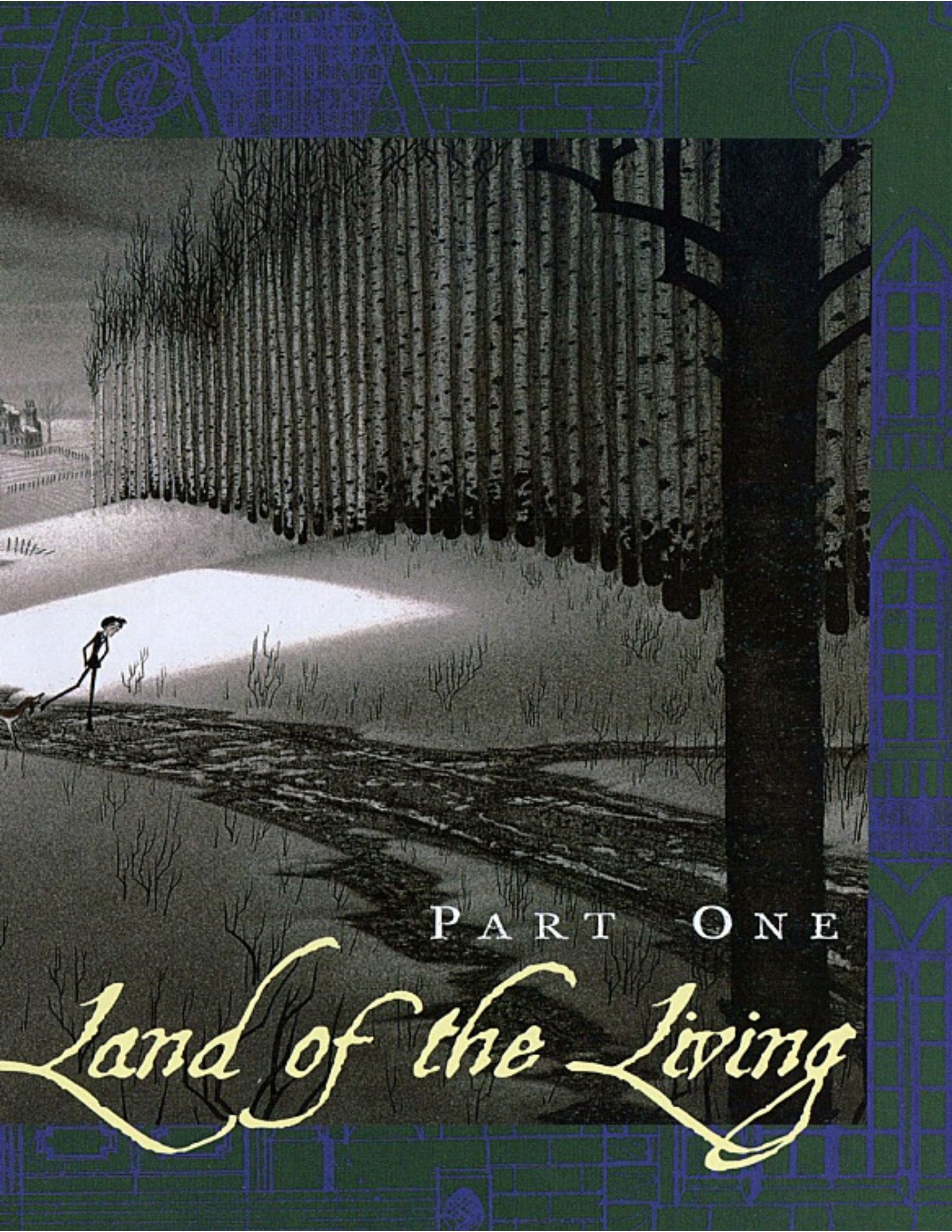
Corpse Bride, I was lucky enough to finally get Helena Bonham Carter, and I visited his home and had a wonderful and delightful experience. I've been very fortunate to meet and work with people I've been inspired by, people like Vincent and Michael Gough, and in every way it's been a truly amazing and rewarding experience. And so it was a pleasure to visit on the set of *Corpse Bride* (which work got done that day.) *Corpse Bride* came from an old folk-story that I'd known since my childhood. It was shortly before we finished *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, was storyboard supervisor John Musker, and *James and the Giant Peach*. His magic at Pixar. He was a master of the story about a man caught between two worlds. It would interest me. This book is dedicated to him and the film.



Sketch by Tim Burton. ABOVE: Burton's sketches of Victoria, and Mr. Bonejangles







PART ONE

Land of the Living







A Very J



rom *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure* to *Beetlejuice*, *Sleepy Hollow* to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Burton revealed himself to be one of cinema's most imaginative worlds fueled by a childlike enchantment.

A dazzling visionary whose work combines a whimsical, oddball imagination, his beautifully crafted fairy tales can also be read as deeply personal. He enjoyed enormous critical and commercial success, of melancholy and a hint of darkness to his work. Mentally, a comic one, his audacious styling and delightfully ghoulish fantasies that are more Grimm than some, films which have both a playfulness and a

Burton began his career at Walt Disney as an animator on *The Fox and the Hound*, that, in his words, came out looking more like "a film such as *The Black Cauldron*. And, in many ways, ever since.

By his own admission, he and the Disney studio but thanks to the foresight of an enterprising executive was allowed to make *Vincent*, a five-minute black and white film about a disturbed little boy obsessed with Vincent Price.

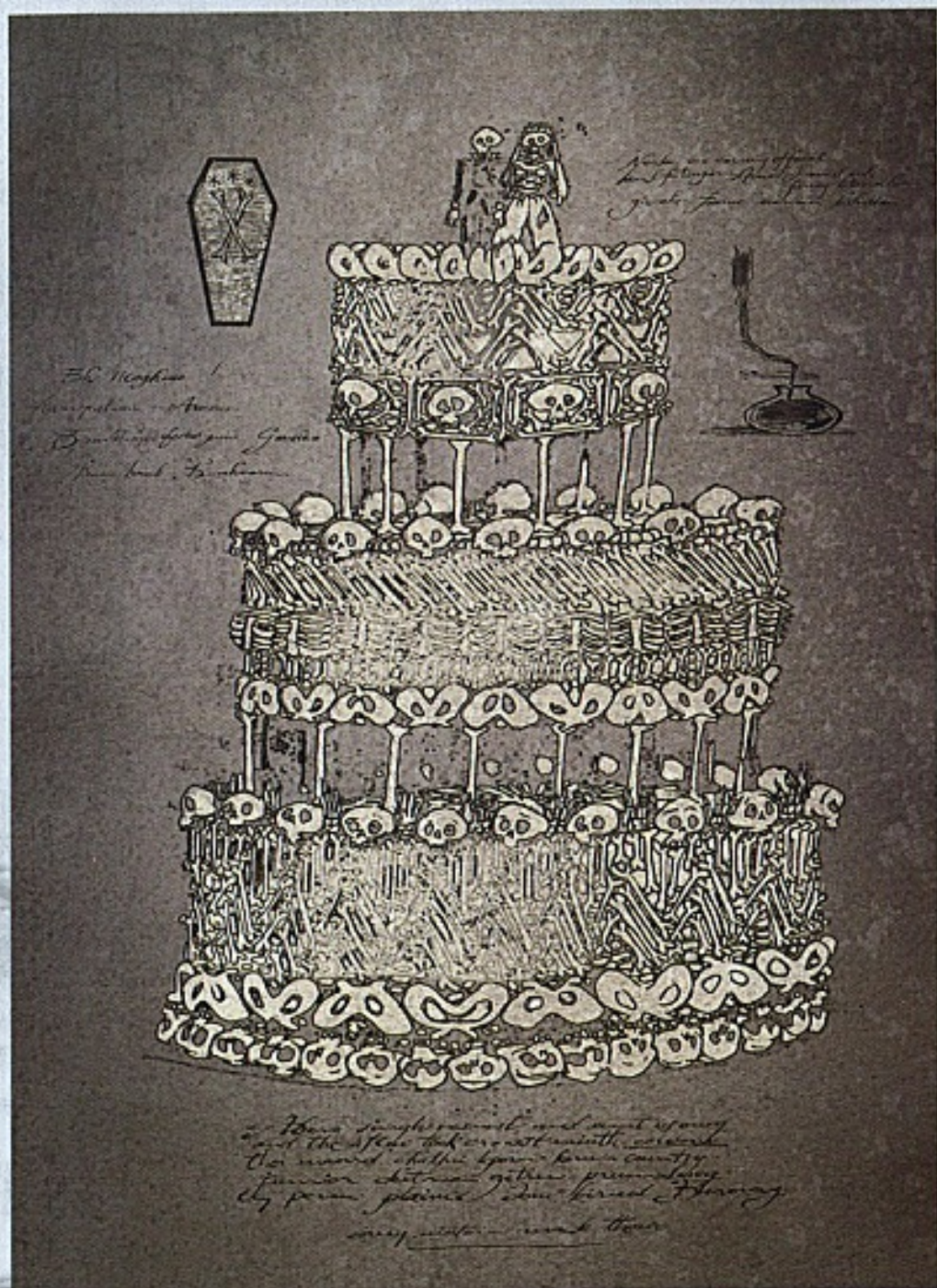
Happy Engagement

Bejuice, Batman to Edward Scissorhands, Chocolate Factory, Tim Burton has
his true originals, constructing alternate
reality and the essential nature of
the world. He combines gothic horror, black comedy, and
quirky designed, highly stylized, idiosyn-
cratic personal visions, albeit ones that have
been successful. And while there's both a touch
of dark, Burton's vision remains, funda-
mentally macabre sense of humor producing
grimms fairy tale than they are grue-
some. An undeniable sweetness at their core.
At Disney Studios in the early 1980s work-
ing on attempting to draw cute little foxes
and "roadkill," and later as a conceptual artist on
various ways, he's remained that animator at heart.

At Disney regime at the time weren't the best fit,
an executive who saw in him the potential, Burton
directed a black-and-white short about Vincent Malloy, a
man and Edgar Allan Poe, as Burton had been.



ABOVE: Producer Allison Abbate (left), directors Tim Burton and Mike Johnson at the Three Mills Studio in East London. OPPOSITE: Animator Phil Dale manipulates Victor.



It was
tion outside of his

Vince
Burton swiftly moved
although he married
into several of his
Adventure and Before Christmas
elaborate stop-motion

Until
venture into the

"I love
this, they're artists
inanimate objects
feel the artists' hands
scious thing, which
put words to. They
not to say you can
tion, you can, but
apart from other
motion, a tactile
emotional resonance
for it, but I do re-

First
in 1907, stop-motion
close to a century
that involves the
dimensional objects
being—to make

B R I D E

is Burton's first foray into stop-motion animation home movies and wouldn't be his last. *ent* found a home on the festival circuit and moved on to directing live-action features managed to incorporate stop-motion animation in subsequent films, among them *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure*, *Beetlejuice*, culminating in 1994's *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, which was, at the time, the most complex and labor-intensive stop-motion animated film ever created. Now that is, until *Corpse Bride*, Burton's latest work in the world of stop-motion animation. "I love stop-motion," he says. "The people who do it are actors, they're breathing life into things like Frankenstein and Pinocchio. And you can see the hands at work. It's kind of an unspoken, subconscious thing is why I like it; it's something you can't quite put your finger on. That's what's interesting about the medium. It's hard to get it in cell animation or computer animation. There's a handmade quality that, for me, sets it apart from other things. There's a magic and mystery to stop-motion, a handmade quality that gives it an allure for me. Maybe it's because I have nostalgia and really believe there is that in the medium." As seen in J. Stuart Blackton's *The Haunted House*, stop-motion animation hasn't changed all that much in 100 years. It's still the incredibly labor-intensive process of the frame-by-frame manipulation of a three-dimensional object—be it a puppet, model, even a human—so that it appears to move. The effect is based on an

optical illusion. By moving an object a little bit, then a bit more, then shooting another frame and projecting at the standard rate of 24 frames per second, one second of stop-motion requiring 24 minutes requires millions.

This painstaking art has produced King Kong climbing the Empire State Building, Fay Wray as Argonauts for the Golden Fleece, to the plucky Imperial Walkers on the snowy wastes of Hoth. A celebrated exponent of stop-motion was Willis O'Brien, who created the technique for *The Lost World* in 1925 and gave life to the character of the tégé Ray Harryhausen whose name has become synonymous with inspired and thrilled generations of moviegoers. *Jason and the Argonauts*, *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, needless to say, is a huge Harryhausen fan.

As late as the mid-1990s, stop-motion was still being used as an effects technique in movies like *Terminator*, *Robocop*, and *Return of the Jedi*. But in the computer-dominated era, stop-motion has largely faded, rendered all but redundant by computer-generated imagery. It has, in turn, had its own devastating effect on the world of animation, the enormous popularity of CGI-animated films like *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life*, *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles*, and *Ice Age*, all but killing off two-dimensional animation.

And yet, stop-motion animation as a craft survives, finding a home in television commercials, music videos, kept alive by the passion and patience of a few, like Britain's Nic Park whose Oscar-winning *Chickenheart* and Wallace and Gromit shorts led to the *Chickenheart* and

OPPOSITE: Prop artwork of the wedding cake created for the film. RIGHT: Mike Johnson (left) with veteran stop-motion animator Ray Harryhausen on the Victoria's Bedroom set.

H E L I V I N G

at a time, shooting one frame of film, moving so on, the cumulative effect, once the film is second, gives the illusion of movement. With cule changes of position, a full-length movie

many of cinema's classic moments, from King Wray in his hairy hand, to Jason fighting the y rebel alliance taking on the might of the in *The Empire Strikes Back*. While the first O'Brien who pioneered it as effects tech- to *King Kong* in 1933, it was his young pro- e synonymous with the medium, having s with films such as *20 Million Miles to Earth*, f *Sinbad*, and *Clash of the Titans*. Burton,

on animation was es such as *The* ut in today's com- allen out of favor, ated imagery which ne traditional cell imated movies like *redibles*, *Robots*, animation. an art form still als, short films, and ronage of people reature *Comforts* ken Run movie.





Then, of course, there's Burton, whose animation has paved the way for both to see the medium in a completely different light.

"Tim's ideas and his sense of humor got into the public eye," declares Mike Jenkins. "It was definitely fading out before the effects, dinosaur effects and all going to computer. *Nightmare* was the charm of it that can't be achieved by computer."

It's this charm and old-fashioned sensibility that's at the heart of Burton's latest stop-motion animation. Though it uses the latest high-tech equipment, it has remained faithful to stop-motion animation.

"In light of the world of special effects, fast cutting and things looking super slick, we made it as if it was made a hundred years ago," explains Burton. "It's a classic sense of humor and a classic sense of humor that's at the heart of the movie. We're bringing the quirks back in because we're using our technology to make motion. The beauty of animation is that even though it's back into every frame, take it out of the real world space."

Story

While *The Nightmare Before Christmas* was being illustrated immediately after finishing *Corpse Bride* came from an even older source.

The genesis was a 19th-century English

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hose lifelong love affair with stop-motion animation in Hollywood and audiences around the world to a different light.

projects have brought stop-motion back into the limelight. Johnson, Burton's co-director on *Corpse Bride*, says, "Before *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. A lot of things like that, that it used to be used for, were opened people's eyes to another use for it, just as it evolved with computers."

and-fashioned artistry that's at the core of the animated feature *Corpse Bride*. Although the film incorporates digital photography, and computer technology, it stays true to stop-motion animation's low-tech roots.

"We're living in now which is all about CGI and I've really strived to make this movie look like *Corpse Bride* producer Allison Abbate the artist. "Even with our CGI stuff we're trying to put the technologies to make it seem more like stop-motion. Every frame is designed as opposed to visual effects and physics. We tried to put that beauty of reality and put it into a more stylized

started life as a poem Burton had written and his work on *Vincent* in 1982, the concept for the film. The story is an Eastern European folktale told to Burton by his

LEFT and OPPOSITE: Early sketches by Tim Burton of the Corpse Bride and Victor.





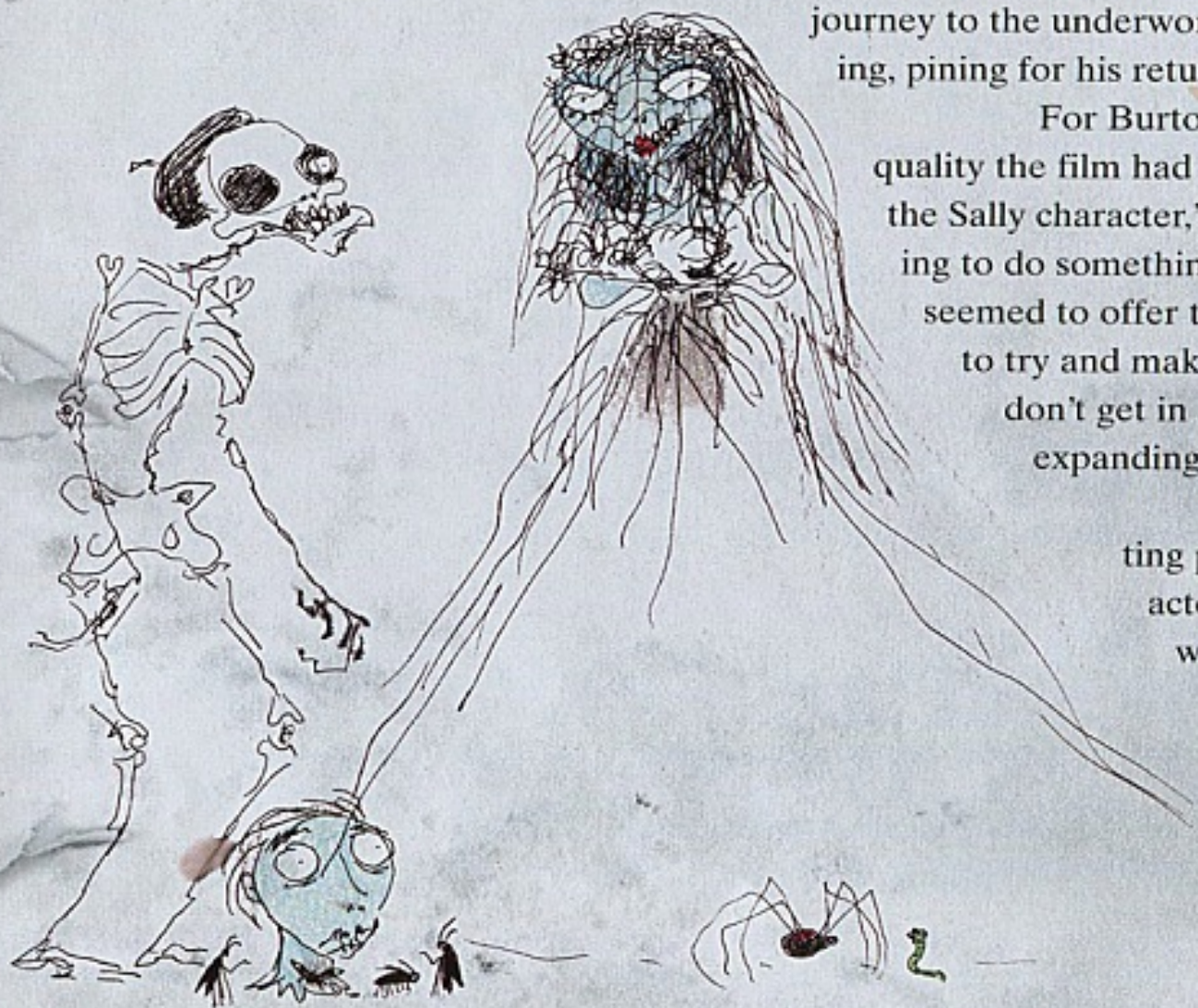
friend Joe Ranft, who had been storyboard artist on the Disney animated feature *The Little Mermaid*, and the Burton-produced *James and the Giant Peach*. He provided the story for *Toy Story* and *A Bug's Life*.

“Joe gave me the idea around the time I had been looking for another project to do in school. I had characters in it from what I recall, except for the ending. And even though it was only a couple of paragraphs, it seemed like it was right for that particular type of story.”

The tale concerned a young man. When his wedding ring winds up on the rotting corpse of a woman who rises from the grave and insists that she is the man's bride, he must undertake a journey to the underworld to set things right. The man is in love with a woman who is dead, and he is in love with her, pining for his return.

For Burton, part of the quality the film had managed to capture was "the Sally character," he says. "It's interesting to do something with that emotion, and it seemed to offer the possibility of trying to make it emotional. I don't get in a lot of animated movies, so I was expanding my female character."

As his imagination
ting pen and paint
acters for what we
with the love-str
Elsa Lanchester
spiritually. The
groom-to-be
women, one



B R I D E

supervisor on *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, before moving to Pixar where he produced *Toy Story*.

"The time of *Nightmare*," recalls Burton who had just been promoted to supervisor, "and it was minimal. There were no other projects at the time. It was like a little short story. It was just a few paragraphs long, it captured my attention. It just had a certain type of animation."

The story is about a young man traveling home in order to wed his fiancée. He finds the severed finger of a murdered girl, who then returns to life. When he's lawfully wedded wife, he's then forced to choose between the living and the dead, while his fiancée remains among the living.

The success of *Nightmare* had been the emotional resonance, particularly in terms of Sally. "I enjoyed the fact that it was nice to get emotion in animation. And I was trying to bring that emotional quality to it again." Ranft's little tale was "to make something else with this medium and have an emotional resonance that you don't get in live-action films. Also," he says, "I was thinking about characters."

As the idea began to percolate, Burton started putting the story on paper, sketching out the first few characters who would eventually become *Corpse Bride*, starting with the character of Corpse Bride herself, who was inspired by the character of the Bride of Frankenstein both visually and thematically. Then came Victor Van Dort, the shy, nervy young man who finds himself caught between two worlds: the living and the dead; Victor's faithful fiancée,

L A N D O F T

Victoria Everglot; her money-grabbing parents, Bonejangles, a skeleton band leader in the mold of The Beatles; Victor's faithful (but deceased) mutt, who has lost his flesh and bones but soon dropped the flesh part.

At around the same time, Burton asked John August, who'd previously written the scripts for *Edward Scissorhands* and *Nightmare Before Christmas* to flesh out the basic idea, producing first a 25-page treatment then a screenplay, which was reworked by Pamela Pettler and then John August. The result was *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* for Burton.

"One of the things Tim was so adamant about was to make a story that could be seen as scary or gruesome, but the truth of love not being skin deep," says producer. "It's about expression and finding one's heart."

"The script took a long time, almost a year, and went through a lot of different drafts." While the idea was in the gin, Burton didn't want to set *Corpse Bride* in a dark, grimy world. "I wanted to keep that fairy-tale aspect," he says. "The elements and largely a British cast, I didn't necessarily want to go there."

As the script developed, so did the character of the bride in a grim, gray, austere milieu that owed its moorland roots to Eastern Europe. Dubbed the Land of the Living, it was a mented kind of place. In contrast, *Corpse Bride* was a trip to the Land of the Dead, which, as conceived, was a world that was more alive than the Land of the Living. "A lot of misperception were familiar ones, redolent of childhood, feeling what people call normal is not normal," he reveals. "Growing up in suburban America, then you have cultures like Mexico where they have a

ABOVE and OPPOSITE:
Early sketches by Tim Burton
of the *Corpse Bride*, Mr. Bone-
jangles, Paul the Head Waiter,
Maggot, and the Black Widow.

H E L I V I N G

Finis and Maudeline Everglot;
l of Sammy Davis Jr.; and
to initially was conceived with

ked Caroline Thompson
Scissorhands and *The*
ic concept, with Thompson
nplay that would later be
ust, who wrote *Big Fish* and

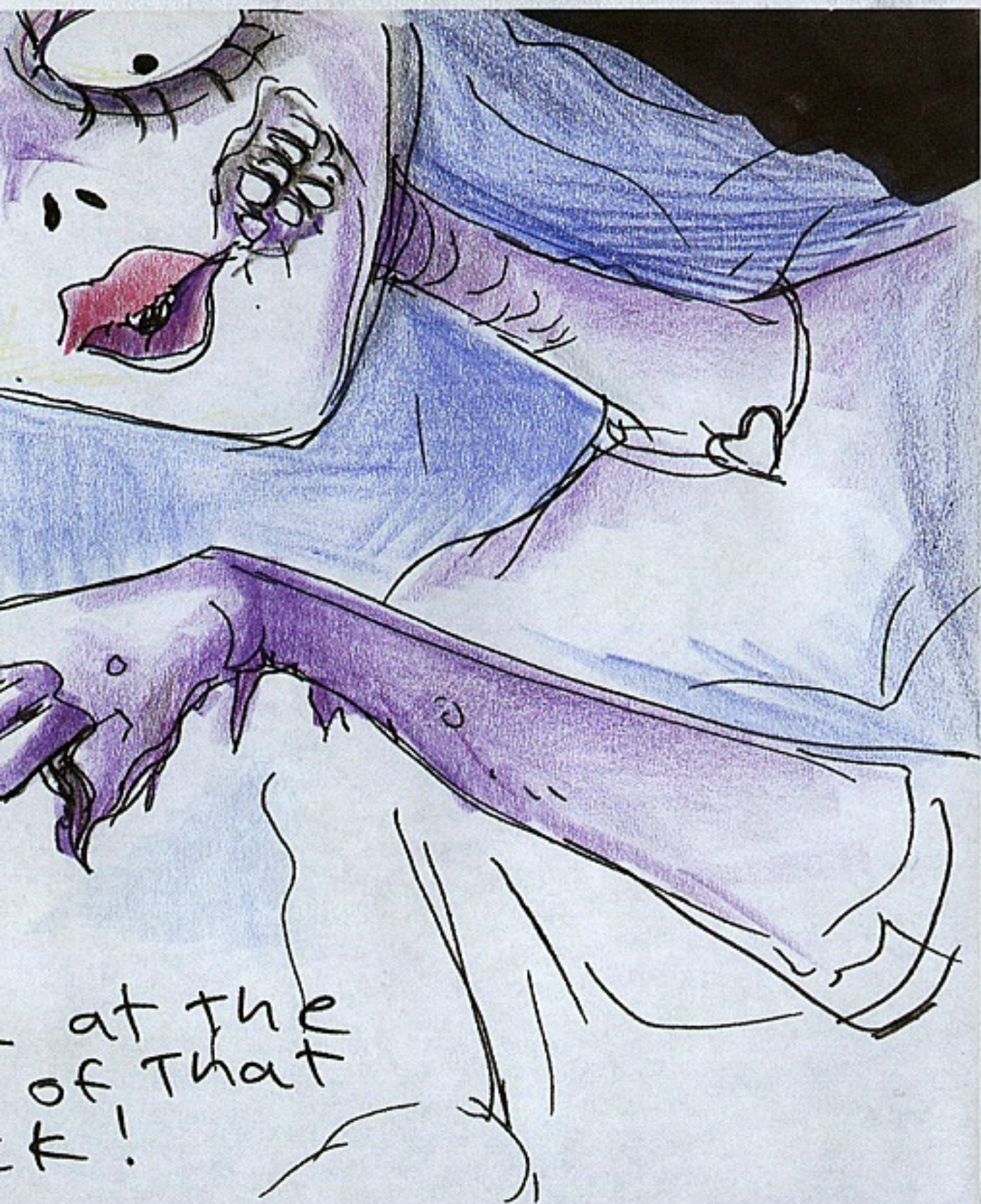
ant about was finding a way to
some into a romantic fable about love and
lucer Allison Abbate. "It's about freedom

ten years to gestate," concurs Burton, "and
e original folktale had been of Russian ori-
ny particular country. "It was very clear to
he says. "Even though it's got Victorian ele-
rily want to set it in a specific place."

haracters and their worlds. Victor would live
als to Victorian England and its look to
g, it was a cold, unfriendly, impersonal, regi-
would, having "married" Victor, take him on
ved, was a brightly colored, joyful, vibrant
Living. For Burton, the themes of inversion
nt of his other work. "That goes back to my
t normal and what people call abnormal
erica where people are afraid of death and
have Day of the Dead, it's such a fun holiday







at the
of That
k!

where they celebrate it, it's fun, the skeletons are alive, and I felt that's much more where I like to be. At the end of the day, and the cycling of life and not being so downbeat, it's not so sad, you want it to be kind of spiritual and hopeful, and beautiful. So it's that sort of thematic thing, it's much more dead than the dead world, and kind of nostalgic, and those feelings that I remember having.

Just as important to Burton as finding the right tone for the story was getting the correct tone for the film's characters. To find the proper balance, because in several drafts, some leaned toward Corpse Bride, others leaned more toward a love triangle, you need to feel for both women. "I felt that Victor wasn't a jerk, he had a really tough exterior, but I felt good that we got the right balance."

"I wanted to treat it more like a movie," says Burton. "I continues, "a romantic fairy tale, a tragic romance. I took the seed from that from the Jack and Sally relationship. I enjoyed and wanted to see if it could go off, different, but melancholy to it, but that's what I took from the book."

"What John August did was to take the book and put in varying amounts of quirkiness and comedy, and I put it into it," explains producer Allison Abbate. "I focused on the stresses Victoria's point of view and the Corpse Bride character. But there is a poignancy in the fable. She triumphs in the end, and, although she gives him a hard time, enough for the both of them."

"I didn't know that until Joe Ranft came along," she continues. "We just naturally gravitated to find out who gets the guy in the end. She is, in many ways, the

OPPOSITE: Early sketch by Joe Ranft. RIGHT: Tim Burton sketch of the Everglots. FOLLOWING PAGES: Concept drawing by Chris Baker.

H E L I V I N G

re doing funny things, and I
same time it's part of life
at about it, even though it's
eful and somewhat mysteri-
hing of the living world being
l of playing those juxtaposi-
g from very early on."

g the right setting for his
love triangle. "We needed to
ts Victor leaned too much
rd Victoria. With this kind of
The audience needed to feel
decision to make. Finally I

vie in a certain way," Burton
tic fairy tale, and I felt the
ship in *Nightmare*, which I
erent, and even more so in a way. There's a
e original story. There's a sadness to it."

the prior versions of the script, which had
really put the passion and the heartbreak
und out later that the original fable really
Bride is more of a monstrous, villainous
because the Corpse Bride's love for Victor
n up, she knows that Victoria will love him

ame to visit us and happened to mention it,"
leshing out Victoria's storyline because she
e heroine of the piece; she's feisty and she











tries to save her man. We wanted to make Victoria an “other woman.” If it was going to be satisfying in the movie, we needed to make Victoria appear as if they were in love. It’s rare in animation to depict characters always going for the gag but going for the poignancy of heart and acting in this movie rivals anything



ABOVE: Director Mike Johnson.

Project D

The Nightmare Before Christmas in development. It turned out, was a mix of sketches, although for whom he was. Even so, it wasn't the focus, when Burton's *Fish*, began to a head the project.

Although *The Nightmare Before Christmas* Burton had known from their days at Disney, undeniably Burton's, with his imprint on the character. But having passed on helming *Nightmare Returns*, Burton wanted to have more direct day interaction with the animators, Burton had worked on both *The Nightmare Before Christmas* going on to direct his own short *The Devil Wears Prada*. Eddie Murphy-voiced TV series *The P.J.s*. “directing *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*”

B R I D E

Victoria a really strong character and not just the
ing for Victor to end up with her at the end of
ealing and worthy, and really believe that they
this kind of emotion and tension. We weren't
oignancy and subtlety of the relationships. The
g I think you'd see in a live-action movie."

Development

are Before Christmas spent more than a decade
ment before reaching the screen, which, as it
about the same time as *Corpse Bride*, the seeds
own back in 1993 when Burton drew his initial
gh it would be two years until Warner Bros.,
as then directing *Mars Attacks!*, came on board.
n't until 2002 that the project finally came into
rton, then on location in Alabama directing *Big*
mass the core creative team that would spear-
t over the next three years.

Christmas was directed by Henry Selick, who
y together, the film, its sensibility, was clearly,
look and design of its every frame and charac-
e, partly because of his commitment to *Batman*
input into *Corpse Bride*. And yet for the day-to-
quired a codirector, hiring Mike Johnson who
Christmas and *James and the Giant Peach*, before
Vent Down to Georgia and an episode of the
He has a sensitivity," says Burton who was busy
for much of *Corpse Bride*'s shoot. "He's done it,

he's animated, he knows what the process is and I've had to have done it and it's hard to communicate that to a more rarefied world."

"I think that Tim and Mike made a great effort. They were able to work really closely in preproduction and I was very much in sync on what was needed for the film."

Having Johnson on set allowed Burton to be involved every day and this has been good for me, and I've been able to step back and look at it a bit more," he reflects. "It's more like I would treat a live-action movie where you don't have the luxury on this of picking from a few things and the shape of things and start to see what you need."

Like *Nightmare* it's very organic. The script is a mix of bits of humor and business, kind of a story that was shaped by people as it goes along."

"One thing I learned was that you need space for creative experimentation. You need time to play a bit. This isn't easy, but that creative spirit comes across in all of his films. It's obvious that the process is as important as the final product."

Preproduction on *Corpse Bride* began in

2003 with Johnson joining production designer (see *Report*) and art director Nelson Lowry, who'd moved to England where Burton is based, and where they would be joined by *The Nightmare Before Christmas* graphic designer Pete Kozachik and, in February 2004, production designer and experienced animation veteran whose credits include *Tunes: Back in Action* and who, like Johnson and

A home
where they
could live
inside The
Bride

Kidney?

maybe they use her
dried up organs for
furniture?

RIGHT: Early sketch of *Accordian Man* by Mike Johnson. **ABOVE:** Early sketch by Joe Ranft.

H E L I V I N G

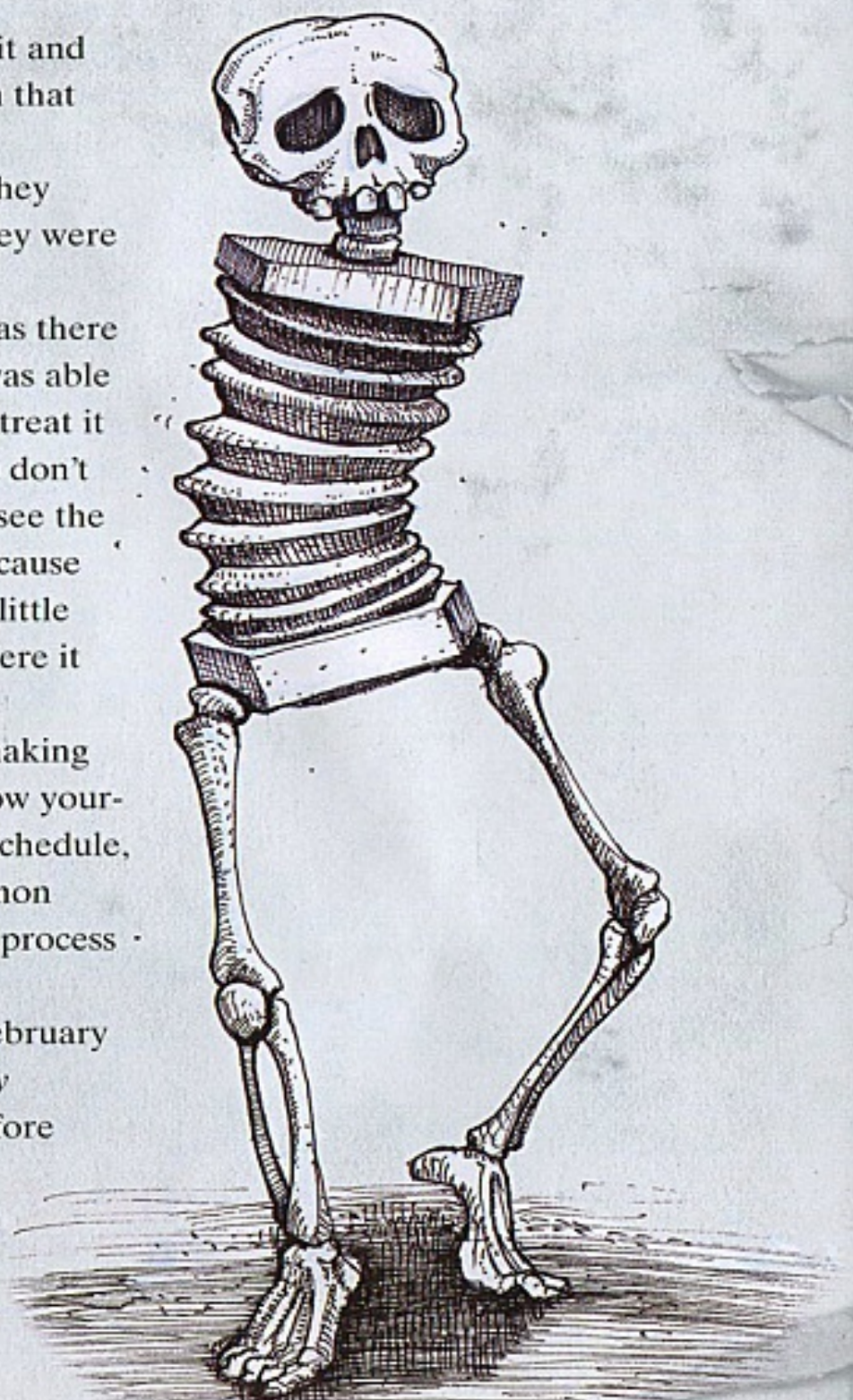
and there are not many people that get it and
t to people when they don't come from that

a really good team," notes Abbate. "They
ion so that once the shooting began they were
animation."

urton the distance he needed. "Mike was there
I think it's worked out for the best. I was able
ects, "to see it as fresh as possible and treat it
ere you look at dailies. And while you don't
akes of performance, you can start to see the
d and don't need and try to form it, because
cript has changed all the way through, little
goes back to the old days of Disney where it
es. There's been a lot of that in this."

orking with Tim is the importance of making
," says Johnson. "To stay loose and allow your-
sy to do with the demands of a hectic schedule,
s on the screen, and I think it's a common
s that he truly loves what he does. The process

le officially began in Los Angeles in February
r Alex McDowell (*Fight Club*, *Minority*
worked with Johnson on *The P.J.s*, before
d Three Mills Studios in East London
e *Before Christmas* director of photog-
roducer Allison Abbate, a highly
ncluded *Iron Giant* and *Looney*
and Kozachik, had worked on *The*



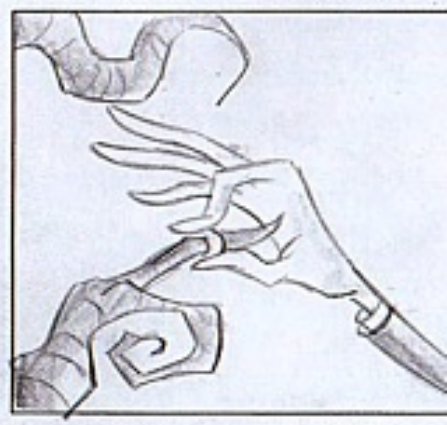
Nightmare Before Christmas as artistic coordinator ever since the *Nightmare* days, and with Tim again, I jumped at the chance. His storyboards were so good. He can look at a story sequence and immediately

Storyboards

On live-action movies, the storyboard producer is the key person. Some filmmakers prefer to storyboard only the special effects sequences only. In animation, however, there can be less emphasis on the script as a final source of information. Storyboard supervisor Jeff Lynch. "And some of the best storyboard artists. In our case we had a really marvelous script from

Even so, the *Corpse Bride* script was so good that characters, jokes, and sight gags being added to it by everyone from Burton, Ranft, and Johnson. I worked with Lynch to break down the script, and

The process served a variety of purposes. It was a previsualization of the entire movie, but also a way of working. The storyboard artists were allowed to "It's a matter of sort of sitting down with the



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ator. "I have wanted to get back into stop-
 -en this opportunity arose to work so closely
 -ory sensibility and visual style are incredible.
 -tely know how to make it better."

process varies from film to film, director to director. Some directors storyboard every shot, others use them for complicated sequences. However, storyboards are crucial because "they're the visual source of story material," says *Corpse Bride* director Tim Burton. "Sometimes you'll even be starting from a concept. From John August."

as, says Burton, "an organic thing," with ideas, throughout the filmmaking process, contributed to the storyboard artists themselves who scene by scene, into thousands of drawings. proposes, not least providing the filmmakers with to see if the script and the characters were sizeable input into the direction of the story. team and talking about the characters and plot





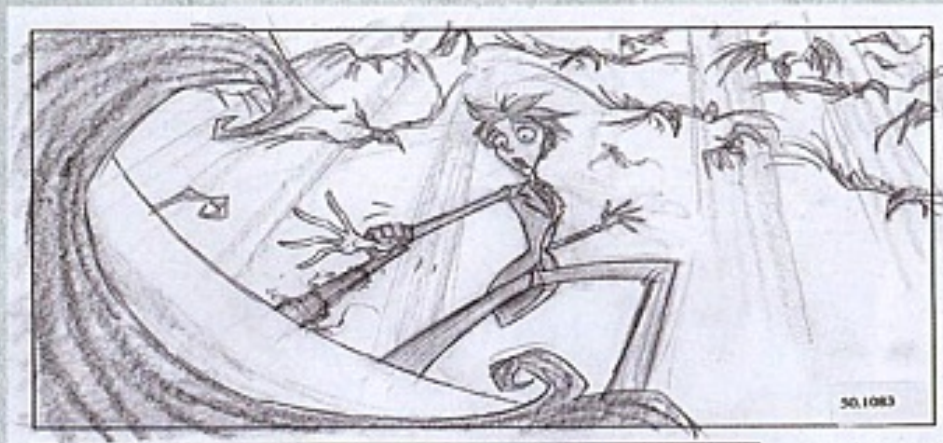
OPPOSITE and ABOVE:
"Victor in the Woods" story-
board sequence by Tim Watts.
RIGHT: Final film still of the
sequence.

points," Lynch notes. "What are the things that lead to resolution? Then you have discussions about what do they want? Where are they going? What are they learning? What does this character learn from this? That you can understand them. And the more you can see whether it's true or not."

"I think it was critical that we had some storyboard artists," notes producer Allison Abner, "and acting that we wouldn't have had from a big studio. It had a subtle Victorian humor and often came up with things that were not obvious."

After the initial pass on the storyboard, the sequence was photographed and turned into what's known as a storyboard. This is then synched up to whatever footage that have been recorded thus far to produce an edit of the movie which can be added to and amended as more footage is shot. "You learn the most," says Lynch, "because then you can see the rhythms of the film and the rhythms of the character. You don't always see when you're looking at it sequentially, even looking at an entire act."

"Stop-motion is so time consuming and expensive, it takes a lot of coverage and multiple takes," says Johnson. "V



have to happen to take you from A to B to C
 t the characters. Who is this character? What
 e they like when they finish? What have they
 his character? You try to bring them alive so
 you know about your characters, the more you

uch a strong team of English and European
 bate. "They brought a great sense of language
 g American crew. They understood the more
 n the strongest moments in the film."

ards is completed, the boards are then pho-
 tory reel—a moving
 r music and/or voices
 initial version of the
 necessary. "That's when
 a you can sense the
 racters, which you
 ence by sequence or

that we can't afford
 We get one take per



shot, and it had better be good. That's why most of our editorial decisions are made during the story reel process where we have the freedom to experiment with different ideas.

Sometimes it takes a while to dial it in. It's not uncommon for a sequence to be storyboarded 50 different ways. Luckily, our storyboard team had an endless reserve of pencils, patience, and bulldog tenacity."

The storyboard artists also worked closely with the editorial team to build the timing and acting of each scene.

"The story reel is really the road map for the animators to follow," says Abbate. "We were lucky to find a really strong group of artists to lay that foundation."

It was during this stage, Lynch says, that it was considered necessary to make Victoria a stronger, more resourceful character in order to compete with the Corpse Bride for



ABOVE: Mike Johnson and storyboard artist Chris Butler

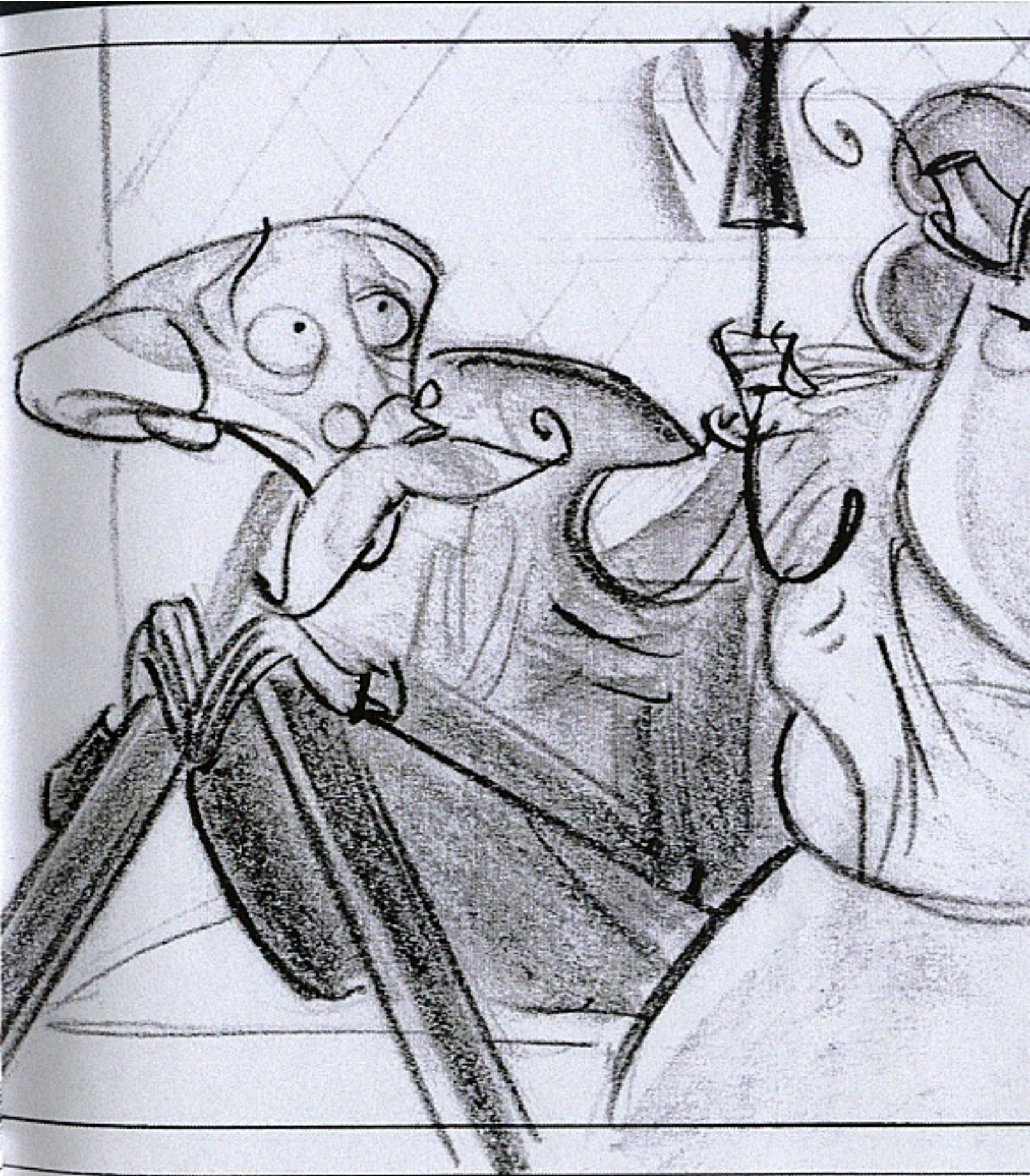
(left), discuss a sequence.

OPPOSITE: Storyboard panel by Sharon Smith with inset of film still.

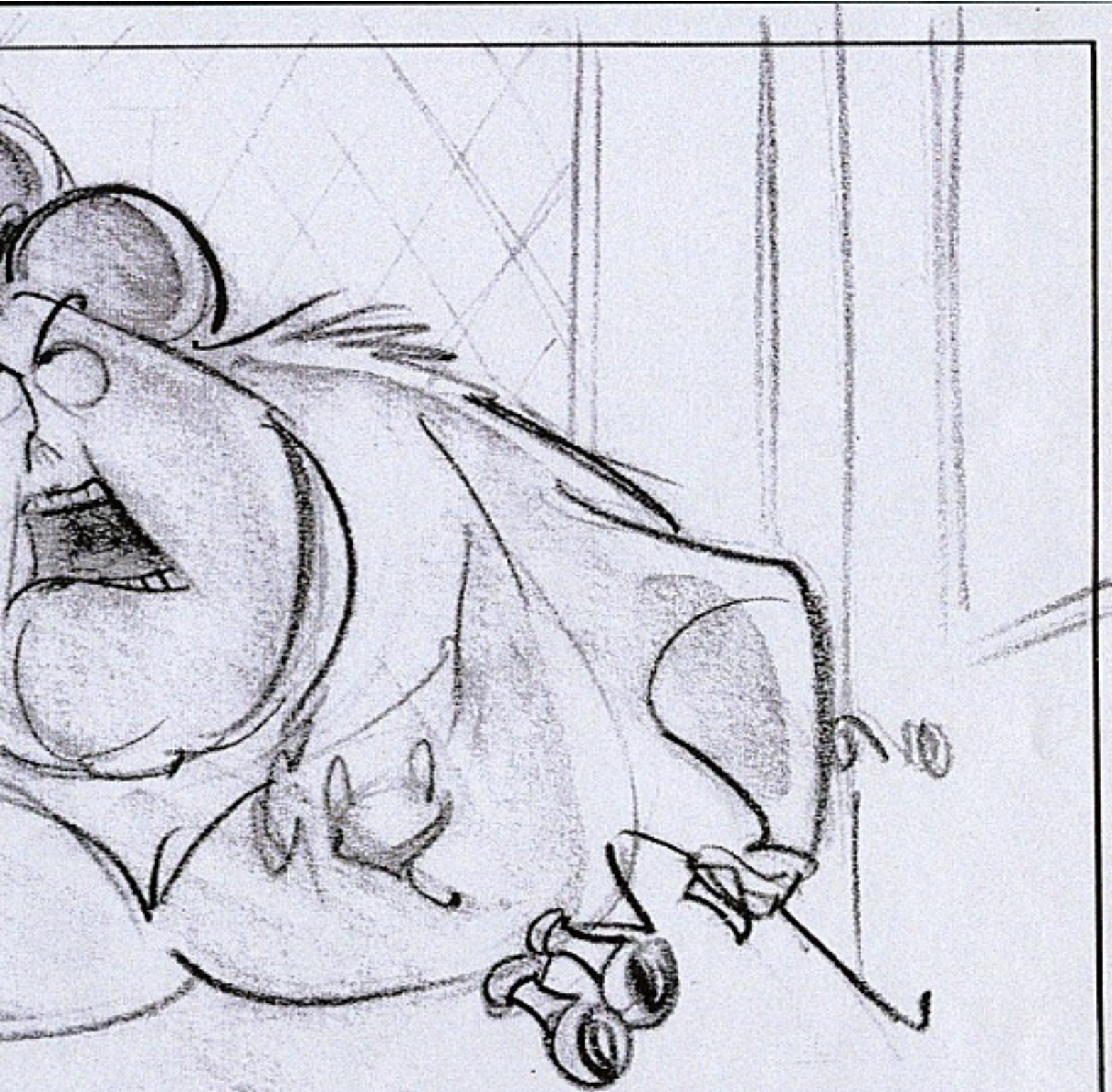
Victor's affections. "The Corpse Bride was so interesting, so dynamic and so colorful, we thought, How can this other woman compete?" he recalls. "You have this hot woman, who's full of life, even though she's dead, but she's got all this vitality and everything. Then you have Victoria who's the product of the Victorian era. So we started looking at the scales going. Why is he going back to Victoria? What can we do to strengthen her character, to make her more strong-willed or to make her more dedicated to him? So that as an audience member you're not going, 'Hey, forget the other girl, go with the Corpse Bride. She's the one that's fun.' That's what we were starting to fear. You want to feel that pull back and forth between the characters so you can understand how Victor could vacillate between the two women."

By the same token, however, Corpse Bride needed to be seen as somewhat sympathetic, especially since she kidnaps Victor and takes him under duress to the Land of the Dead. "You want to see how he could be kidnapped but then grow to appreciate and to become close to the Corpse Bride while still remaining in love with Victoria," says Lynch. "And then what happens if that love is no longer something that he can pursue? You don't

— and stop



Stop that infernal cough



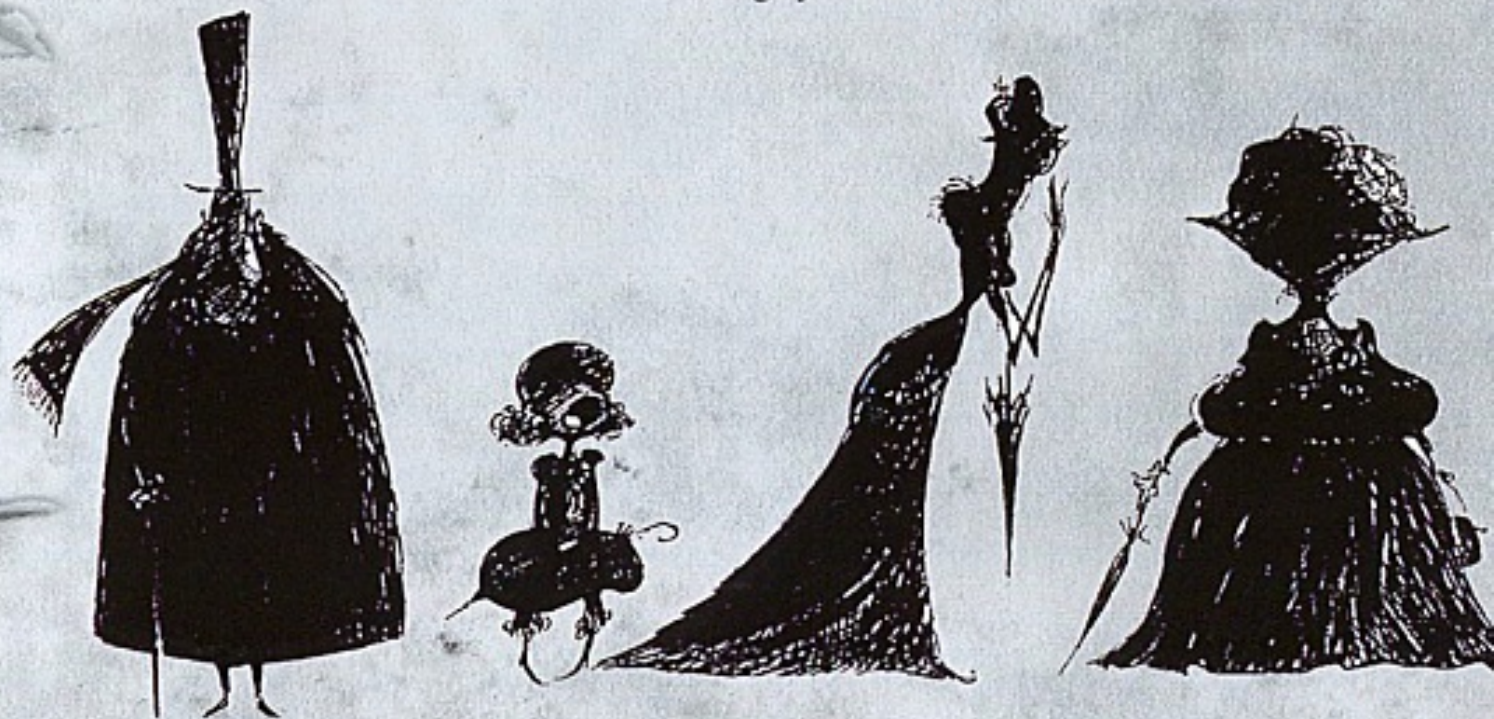
ming !! "



want to be feeling like he's going to jump with you're thinking, What a putz. But if he stands to go with the other character. So it's this fine character and true to his first love, but still choos

Creating Characters

In order to flesh out his initial designs in Burton approached acclaimed puppet master Peter Dinklage, who operates out of Manchester, England, and *Wind in the Willows*, and numerous commercials, "sensitive and textural," says Burton who *Attacks!* when his plan was to do the *Ma* given the complexity of the film, stop-motion being all computer-generated, but Burton had they do commercials, they do *Bob the Builder* chance to show what they can *really* do," he said they really do amazing work. I saw that based *Attacks!*. There was no question in my mind to the guys to do it."

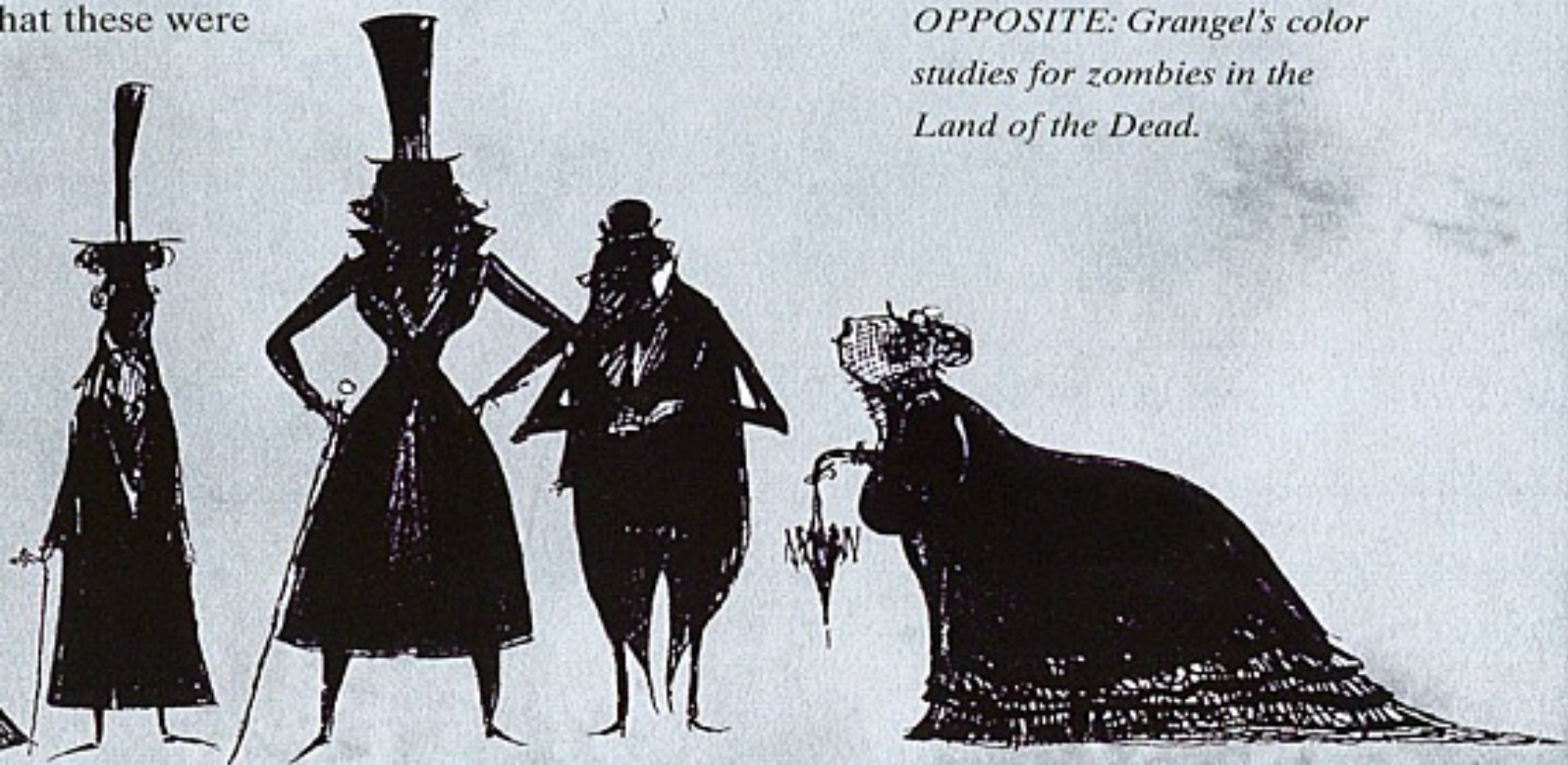


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h whatever woman is available, because then too strongly in one area, then there's nowhere the line of how does Victor seem true to his character to stay with this other person?"

to fully realized three-dimensional characters, makers Ian Mackinnon and Pete Saunders, whose credits include *Bob the Builder*, *The Mercials*. "They do such beautiful work. Very I'd worked with them originally on *Mars Martians* using stop-motion animation. In the end, proved unfeasible and the Martians ended up I enjoyed their collaboration. "Like everybody, and things like that, but they rarely get the says. "They've got a good group of sculptors and I on the puppets they had done for *Mars* that these were

LEFT: Tim Burton's original sketch for the Corpse Bride. BELOW: Preliminary sketch of Land of the Living characters by Carlos Grangel. OPPOSITE: Grangel's color studies for zombies in the Land of the Dead.





KIND OF DEAD
PEACOCK

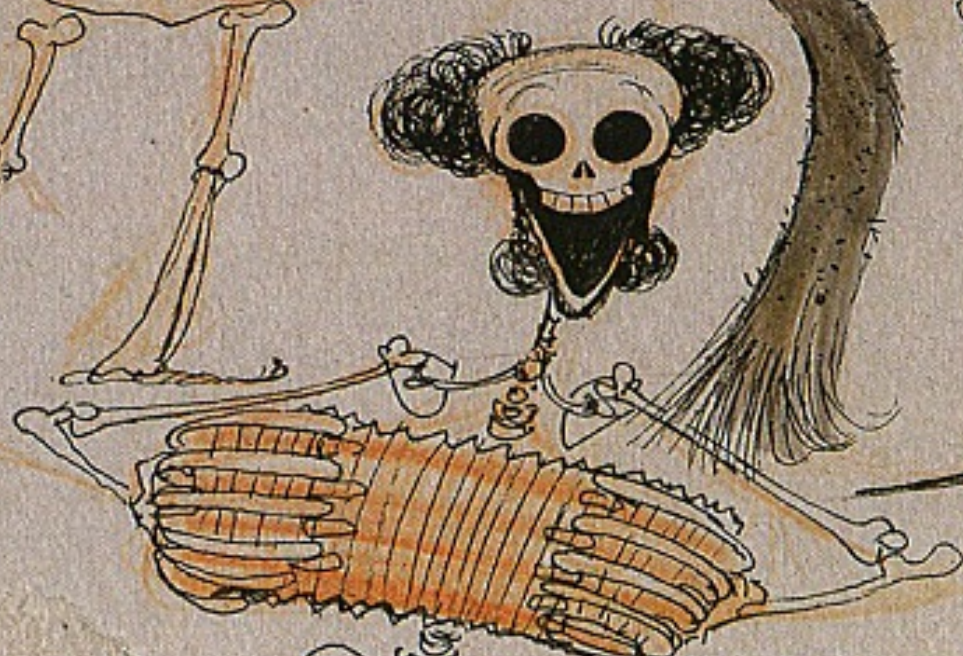


DEAD
PIGEON

KUAK
KUAK



NEEDS
BETTER
DESIGN
FOR RIB
CAGE







ABOVE: Master puppet manufacturers Ian Mackinnon (left) and Pete Saunders.

RIGHT: Key artists in character creation (from left to right) Carlos Grangel, Huy Vu, Carlos' brother Jordi and Carlos Burges, type designer.

OPPOSITE: Grangel's concepts for the skeleton band on his preferred medium of cardboard boxes.

"We were back in 1995 when Tim Burton was working on *Corpse Bride*," recalls Mackinnon. "It was dear to his heart. We heard nothing about it until [in December 2001] he said, 'Could we come and do a puppet show?'"

Burton showed them as well as a *Corpse Bride* time friend and collaborator, Vincent, had been a v

Christmas, and had later served as production designer for *Apes*, had built many years before. They, says Mackinnon, was looking for something a little bit different from *Christmas*. "Tim had these sketches of the lead characters were already there: Victor, Victoria, and the skeleton band. "They were sort of quick pencil sketches and paper characters. But how they would translate into puppets was up to us," says Saunders. "His style of working is to get ideas down on paper with such great characters but we needed to have them in a more tangible form."

The solution turned out to be right under their noses. During a visit to Mackinnon and Saunders' studio, Burton caught sight of some sketches that Carlos Grangel, an animation character designer, had done for *Apes*. The Oscar-nominated short film for which they'd built the puppets. Originally a comic-strip artist, the Spanish-born Grangel moved into animation with Steven Spielberg's *Amistad* in the 1990s, becoming a much sought-after character designer in the animation field, working on a number of Disney

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working in Los Angeles on *Mars Attacks!* Jim first showed us some sketches from Mackinnon. "It was obviously a project that he was hoping to get the movie made. He put it out for quite a number of years and then he called up, said he was in London and wanted to discuss the project again." Jim showed them the character drawings he'd done for the Corpse Bride maquette that Rick Heinreichs, a long-time collaborator who'd helped create the puppets for Jim, visual consultant on *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, designer on *Sleepy Hollow* and *Planet of the Apes*, gave them an indication that he was familiar with the puppets in *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and the great thing was the character drawings. "The Corpse Bride," Mackinnon remembers. "The drawings were beautiful, but he'd captured the look of the puppets was a bit of an unknown," confirms Jim. "He moved forward quickly, and the sketches are imbued with a sense of those refined."

Under their noses. Jim also in late 2002, met Jim Grangel, a lead character designer on *Periwig Maker*, an animated film about the puppets. Grangel had worked at Blum Studios as a character designer on *DreamWorks*



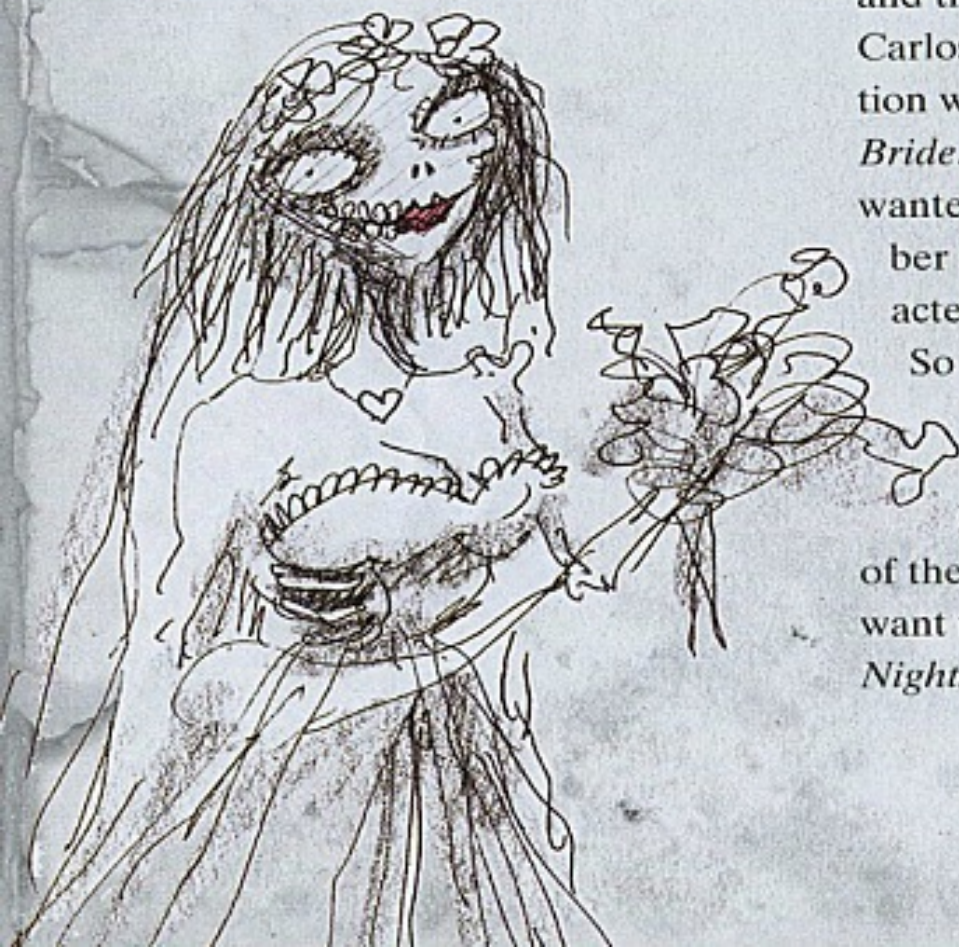
animated projects, including *The Prince of* strength of his *Periwig Maker* drawings and to help refine and develop Burton's sketches to populate the film's Land of the Living and I

"Carlos is a great designer," Burton says. "He was really sensitive about taking things and making the look of it was and expand upon it. The biggest challenge in *Nightmare*, none of the characters were real. When you try and do human characters they don't really flesh things out."

"He handed me a bunch of sketches that were lovely, very loose, great lines, some of them were like, 'What is great about Tim is he can do the entire vision and his way of doing things. I started

That was in January 2003 and over the next few months and the team at his small Barcelona-based studio. Carlos Burges, who came up with the film's visual style, joined the team at Mackinnon and Saunders. "I remember Tim saying he wanted to see the thumbprint on the face of every character," Burton remembers him saying that every character has to be a main character, and incidental characters, the more the better. So when you see the movie you find even

Burton was keen to differentiate the characters from those in *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. "His signature style: large eyes, small pupils," Burton says. One of the biggest challenges working on this was to make them want them to seem like a reworking of the characters in *Nightmare*, even though you can see the seeds



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Egypt, *Shark Tale*, and *Madagascar*. On the
a meeting with Burton, Grangel was brought on
s into a complete cast of characters who would
Land of the Dead.

ton says. "My sketches are often quite crude but
and trying to understand what the feeling and the
est challenge was the human characters. On
lly human and I always find with stop-motion
y're really unappealing. But Carlos really helped

ches, maybe six, seven, eight characters, and they
them with a bit of water color," Grangel recalls.
ntire film himself but he wanted to share his
working on the film right away."

ver the course of the next few months Grangel
studio (which included his brother Jordi and
typography and logo), working in close conjunc-
ders, began conceptualizing the cast of *Corpse*
to see this film as a very artistic film, that he
f the characters," Grangel notes. "And I remem-
o be interesting. Main character, secondary char-
e interesting the better, the richer the film will be.
ry character is interesting—at least to look at."

ntiate the look of the characters in *Corpse Bride*
Christmas, although they still had to adhere to
pils, long, spindly legs, and tiny feet. "For me, one
ith Victor and the Corpse Bride was that I didn't
Jack Skellington and Sally characters from
ed of them within those," codirector Mike

*LEFT: Tim Burton's original
sketch for Corpse Bride.*

*OPPOSITE: Grangel's early
sketches for Corpse Bride.*







ABOVE: Grangel's color concepts for Corpse Bride.

RIGHT: The final maquette built by Mackinnon and Saunders. OPPOSITE: Grangel's concepts for the Cooks. FOLLOWING PAGES: Grangel's ideas for inhabitants of the Land of the Dead.

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The look of Corpse Bride herself was in the sketches, but there was still work to do before Grangel. Corpse Bride was the character that was the hardest because she had to be ghoulish but not gruesome. "That was very hard to make someone who was way more pretty than she was in both Tim's and my eyes. I didn't want it to go the gross way, the gruesome way. I didn't want to make something corny. It had to be elegant and she had to be very so-

"Corpse Bride had an interesting core of her in Tim's first sketch but she went through a few different extremes. At one point she was crustier, covered with roots; then there was

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ays. "We had to keep them within Tim's world
ry to take them as far from the *Nightmare* look
e could and still make them feel Burton-esque."

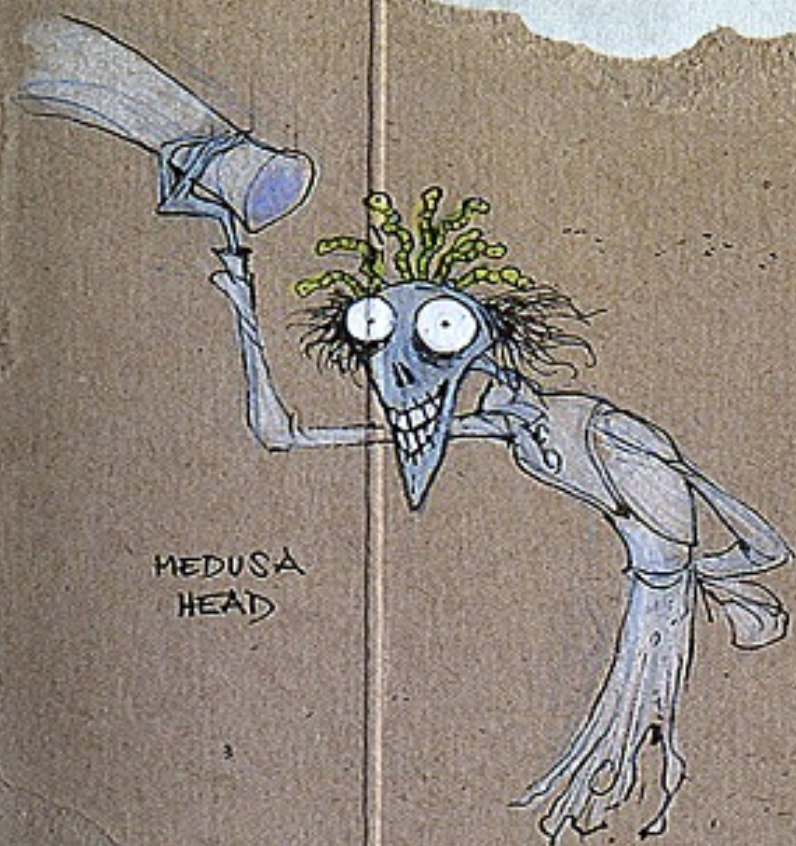
Grangel started on the Land of the
ving characters using a series of Victorian pho-
ographs—high-society portraits and wedding
bums—that McDowell and Johnson had chosen
as inspiration. "They were all already caricatures
with the long hats and the feathers and all that,
and I wanted to add more on that style," he says.

Although, as Burton previously discovered,
human characters, no matter what you do, are
ays difficult to do. With an animal you can
ays push it and make it funny and graphic, and
se characters were tough, particularly Victoria
Corpse Bride, they were the hardest."

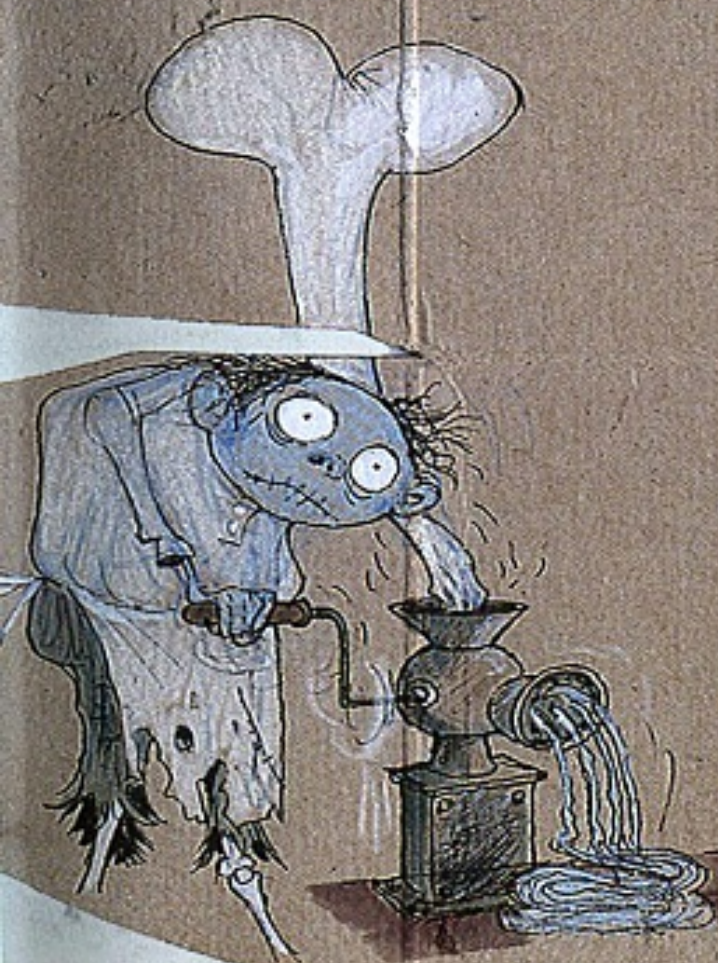
f had been set very early on in Burton's initial
re everyone was completely happy. According to
at both he and Burton did the most designs for
some, dead but beautiful—a challenge for any
ething nice and yet it's a zombie. We did her in a
early sketches and our early sketches. We didn't
ay, at the same time we
d to be a zombie but it had to be pretty and it
phisticated."

g evolution," Johnson agrees. "You can see the
t back and forth through a
as much more zombielike,
a design phase where she





MEDUSA
HEAD



LUNCH TIME



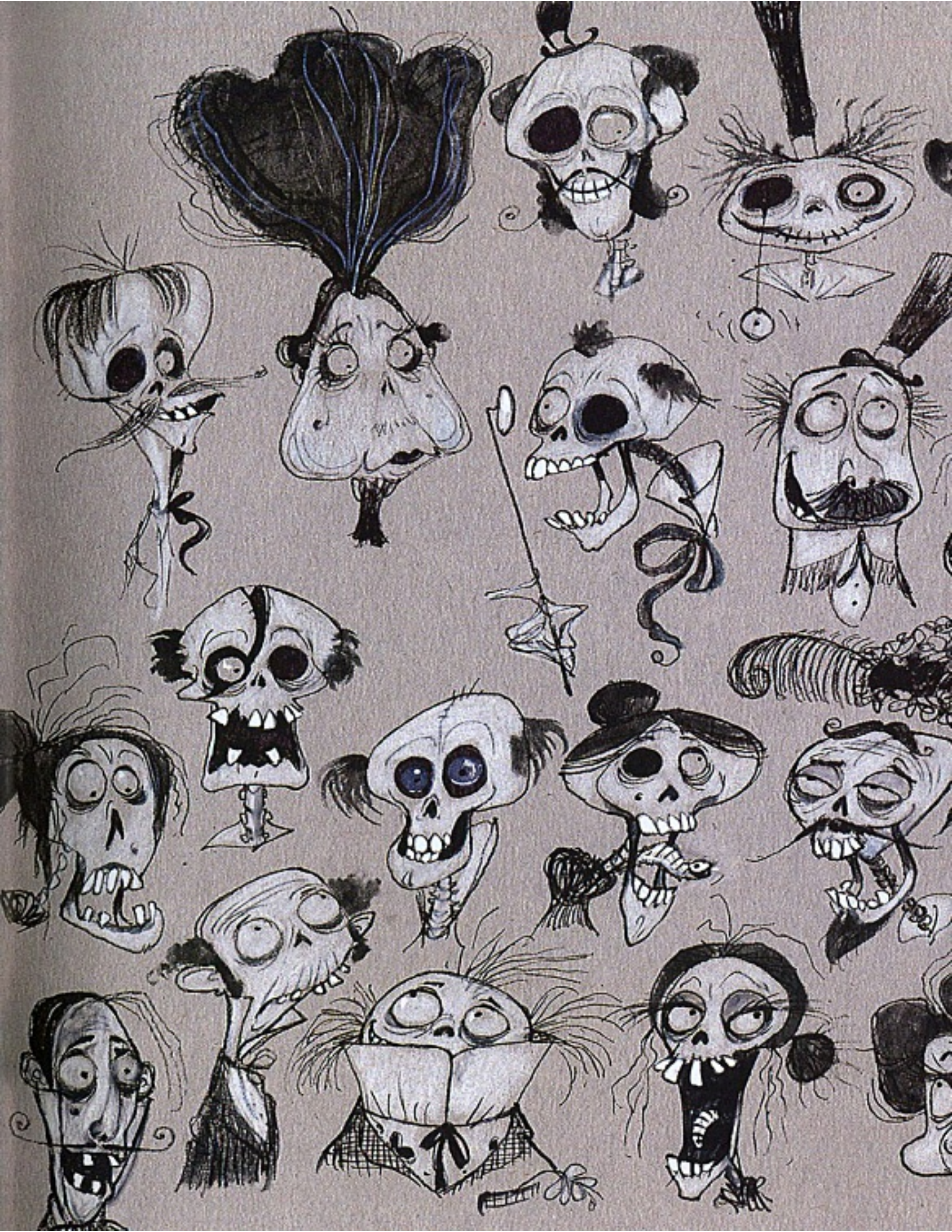
BARBECUE
KIT



SALAD
DRESSING









was much more corpselike; and then she sw
Hollywood glamor look which is what we w
obsessed about each detail, even the veil an
time to get it to where it needed to be."

It was the same with Corpse Br
low until very late in the day when Burton
together a bit more, so she had much more
says. "We experimented with a few things b

Unlike a lot of cell-animation m
resemble those actors who are voicing them
suit. And yet there's something more than
of *Corpse Bride* cast members. Grangel ad
Christopher Lee from the Dracula movies
like") into his designs for Pastor Galswell v
had Helena Bonham Carter, who would go
Corpse Bride, in mind when designing the

Helena for the voice but I did some ske
of Tim's early ones in which

chin more a
head that H

"of course V
looks like
these char
although I
hoped tha

from Burton
Johnny Dep



ving back to this more 30s, 40s
were going for. Also, we were all
and her dress took a long, long

ide's hair color, which was yel-
opted for blue "to tie her
of a singular color scheme," he
out ultimately that felt right."

ovies whose characters tend to
n, stop-motion doesn't follow
a little familiar about a number
mits to putting some of

("very sinister, kind of vulture-
whom Lee voices, and says he
on to provide the voice for the
character. "Tim suggested

atches that were more Helena than some
ch the head was kind of more pointy and the
triangular shape. I wanted to add that oval fore-
Helena has on her face, it's really pretty."

"It's funny," Johnson notes, "a lot of people say,
Victor looks like Johnny Depp or Corpse Bride
Helena Bonham Carter," but at the point when
acters were designed we still had not cast the film,
think at the back of everyone's mind we kind of
it's where it would go."

As with Corpse Bride, Victor didn't change much
n's original sketch, and while he looks not unlike
pp who voices him, anyone who's seen Burton's





OPPOSITE and RIGHT:
Grangel's concepts for Elder
Gutknecht, Mr. Bonejangles,
and Maggot on his preferred
medium of the back of card-
board cereal boxes.

stop-motion short *Vincent* will notice a striking Victor an adult version of Vincent, who, it must "I can see that," he says. "My drawing style is pr sort of end up being a grown-up looking version draw. Spiritually, it sort of makes sense in the ty

Victoria, who would eventually be vo actress Emily Watson, proved to be another inte lence according to Johnson because the charact to hold her own against Corpse Bride. "Throug stage I was concerned she would be a little too l the spotlight with the other two," he reflects. "E was so simple and elegant that once we saw her mation test, she just came to life. It is the contra ity versus all the detail in Corpse Bride that wor

Another two of Burton's earliest crea go through much of a design evolution were Fir Maudeline Everglot, the short and stout and ski tall parents of Victoria, who would be voiced by and Joanna Lumley. "Finis is one of my favorite Johnson. "He was sort of the purest coming out sketch, the character was there and just throug and the voice he just seemed to me the one that least amount of experimentation to nail. Maude designs and I think he was going for an extreme ents, William and Nell Van Dort (voiced by Pau tough design to crack. "It took a lot of searching side Victoria's parents, who had such a strong d from Carlos and his team."

One of the unique aspects of Grange

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similarity between the two characters, with
be said, also looks not unlike Burton himself.
pretty specific and fairly limited, and Victor did
of Vincent because basically that's the way I
pe of project it is as well."

oiced by the British
eresting design chal-
er physically had
hout the design
bland to share
But her design
move in the ani-
st of her simplic-
rks for her."
ations who didn't
ais and

inny and very
y Albert Finney
e characters," says

of the gate from Tim's first
the sculpting process and finally the puppet
t was there from the beginning and took the
line too. They're very similar to his original
e contrast in shape." As a result, Victor's par-
(Whitehouse and Tracey Ullman), proved a
g to find characters that could stand along-
esign sense," says Johnson, "a lot of work

el's creative process is the fact he drew all his



Corpse Bride character designs on the back boxes, specifically Von's Krispy Rice and Ke says. "Almost 85 percent of the characters s ones. Some boxes are darker than others an patina, the gray of the cardboard helped him using pastels and colored pencils to give his mix of Victorian and Grimm's fairy tale.

Having produced a cast of characters that everyone had agreed on, Grangel moved on to those inhabiting the underworld. "In the Land of the Dead, you can go more wild, you can go more graphic,"

Of the many underworld characters, there's Elder Gutknecht, the skeletal leader of the *Corpse Bride* underworld. He was played by Alfred in Burton's *Batman* films, and Oogie Boogie from *Nightmare on Elm Street*, was inspired by the character. The character was inspired by the character of the 1930s vaudeville performer and comedian, Sammy Davis Jr. Along with the tragic story of *Corpse Bride* in a Cab Callaghan play, "The Cab Callaghan Play" written and performed by Burton.

Then there's Maggot, who spends advice and sarcasm in equal measures, whose great character actor Peter Lorre. "From the Peter Lorre-esque character, and we had a good number of various design changes," says Johnson. "Some of the things that were similar; sometimes it looked a little too much like the ground where that was working."

Whenever Maggot goes, so does the heart of gold, voiced by Jane Horrocks. "We didn't know until the third draft," Johnson admits. "We knew we'd be a team but we didn't know if she was going to be."

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of breakfast cereal boxes. But not just any cereal Kellogg's Special K. "These are two favorites," he suggested for *Corpse Bride* were done on those and I have to get the right one." For Grangel, the present the characters in the best possible light, drawings a look that worked well for the film's

acters for the Land of the Living that everyone depicting the underworld, whom, he says, were easy to have the skeletons and the zombies and you and you can go more crazy."

ers, several stand out from the ghoulish crowd. of the underworld voiced by Michael Gough who Bonejangles, the skeleton band leader who, as inspired by a musician, in this case, Rat Pack member with his skeleton band, Mr. Bonejangles reveals a New Orleans-inspired jazz number called "The Remains of My Day" by his regular musical collaborator Danny Elfman. During his time inside *Corpse Bride*'s head, doling out the personality and voice were inspired by the late, in the very beginning Tim wanted the Maggot to be a good time working with that and it went through a lot of times it looked a little too much like a caterpillar or a snake; so we just had to find the middle

Black Widow Spider, an affable arachnid with a personality. "We weren't really sure what her character was, up to the point when we saw the new from the drawings that we wanted them to be a motherly type or this seasoned voice



ABOVE: Mackinnon and Saunders lead sculptor Noel Baker. RIGHT: Some of the detailed notes kept for each character for the puppet sculptors to follow.

of wisdom to the Horrocks got into voice that that c

“Paul

Whitehouse, was again didn’t char continues. “He went sort of came back what the inspirat French waiter ca

In all

82 different *Corp* were ultimately

changes and characters were dropped. “The gre other characters, the background characters, be screen time, was you can look at them and you some of the relatives who’ve come for the wedo just get it right away, and I felt very good about

Once an initial lineup of around 26 c characters, mainly from the Land of the Living, approved by Burton, it was time for the team at and Saunders, with Grangel continuing to super designs, to begin the process of translating them dimensional puppets. This was easier said than cause of the extreme proportions inherent in B original creations.

“Tim’s characters are always a challenge as a three-dimensional model because they tend tall and skinny and tend to have very, very tiny

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e Corpse Bride. So it wasn't until Jane
involved and gave us some options with the
character came together.

l the Head Waiter, voiced by Paul
s another of Burton's earliest creations that
nge much from his first sketch," Johnson con-
t through a few mutations along the way but
k around to where he started. Not quite sure
tion was, other than the fact Tim wanted a
arried by beetles."

, Gragnel and his studio ended up designing
ose Bride characters although not all of them
used as the script went through many
eat thing I think Carlos brought to a lot of the
because there's a lot that don't have a lot of
can see the character," says Burton. "You see

ling, and you
that."

or so
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t Mackinnon
rvice their
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enge to build
l to be rather
feet which is





ABOVE: Tim Burton inspects the first maquettes in 2003.

RIGHT ABOVE: Composite image of the "maquette" cast at Mackinnon and Saunders.

OPPOSITE BELOW LEFT: Angela Kiely applies paint to Victoria's dress. OPPOSITE BELOW RIGHT: Grangel works on a maquette.

heads were all about 25 to 30 centimeters and all the time trying to manipulate a head and has to be secured well to the set."

"We were pushing the boundaries. The hinges and joints needed to hold these small. It's characteristic of Tim's style that the and tiny feet and that doesn't lend itself well to port themselves. Once Carlos got involved further, so we had very thin, thin joints on where the puppet makers really had to stretch such a tiny scale."

Ironically, it's here computer technology that couldn't support their own weights due would use metal rigs to keep them upright,

te unique. Model animation characters tend to be
arter and have huge feet just because gravity helps
d them down," reveals Mackinnon, whose team
ld sketch turnarounds of each character before
n sculpting a series of maquettes that Carlos
uld get photographs of and draw on and make
es, along with Johnson and Burton. These would
passed back to Mackinnon and Saunders for fur-
r refinement; the process continuing until each
pt was approved. Only then would the puppet-
king stage begin, with molds made and armatures
t. "We had to look at different ways of engineer-
the joint system that we use inside the models
d how they would support the weight of the char-
r." Part of the problem was that the characters'
way from the floor. "The animator is reaching up
d there's an awful lot of leverage, so the puppet

es on what physics allowed," agrees Johnson.
e puppets in place were much thinner than nor-
ese characters have very narrow, tapering legs
ll to stop-motion where the puppets have to sup-
in the design those extremes were pushed even
ertain characters. Scraps was a good example of
ch themselves to create mechanical joints on

hnology would prove useful. For those puppets
e to their thin legs or tiny feet, the animators
rigs that would then be removed digitally.





In terms of their armatures, the joints were made of wood or aluminium, that allow them to be positioned as needed. They weren't that dissimilar from those created for *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.



What was different was what went into the skin. While most stop-motion puppets are covered with either foam latex or silicone-based skin, for *Corpse Bride*, Tim Burton and Tim Saunders produced skin that was a combination of the two. "They used a mix of foam latex which gives it a matte finish," says Saunders, "and silicone which had bonded to them a very thin layer of silicone, which gave a very smooth finish and which was more realistic."



ed, movable metal skeletons, typically steel
 as required, the *Corpse Bride* puppets
 the *Nightmare Before Christmas*. What was
 on the *outside* of
 motion puppets are
 in latex or a silicon-
ride, Mackinnon and
 s that were a combi-
 y had a substructure
 s a lot of malleabil-
 d on top of that they
 ery thin coating of
 y smooth and clean
 re suitable for the





ABOVE: *Corpse Bride* hair tests. BELOW LEFT: Mold with *Corpse Bride* "Tiara." BELOW RIGHT: Cordelia O'Neill applies "hair" to the underlying armature to create movement.



paint finishes that Tim and C
ters. And some of these comb
into them. It was almost like

The results were p
latex skin makes them look li
"These are a silicon latex con
Corpse Bride has got dewy b
really seem like she's alive." E
"Her hair is very complicated
many different tendrils of mo

"It was crafted onto a three-part
system of malleable wires affixed to this me
head—her tiara had access points where yo
skullcap that had an organic feel to it when

The method employed in *Nightm
movement was a series of replacement head
allow them to emote, speak, or sing by, liter
necessary. Although the result was extreme*

own set of proble
ment animation t
predetermined by
explains Mackinn
sculpts that have
only a limited num
you can do for ea
animator then has
set number and th
facial expressions.

Johnso

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Carlos were driving for, for the look of the character skins had tiny, tiny joints actually cast as a bionic skin in a way."

plain to see. "If you look at *Nightmare*, the wrinkly like puppets," says producer Allison Abbate.

combination that really makes it look like the beautiful skin, and to me that's what makes it. Even Corpse Bride's hair was something special.

l," continues Abbate. "That hair is made from hair and silicon, it's like a puppet itself."

the wig base," explains Saunders, "and had a whole metallic skullcap that was actually bolted on to the you could bolt it to the wig. It was like a metallic it was all assembled."

mare to give its puppets a full range of facial ds, each with a different expression, that would ally, the animators replacing their heads when ly successful, the technique brought with it its

ms. "With replace- the animation is y the voice track," on, "and by the to be done. There's mber of sculpts that ch character, so the s to work with that hey can't alter those " on was determined



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to try a different method for *Corpse Bride*. "At with replacement heads," he says, "but my conc flesh-colored face that has subtle shading painted I didn't think it would hold up under tight close- had in mind was something akin to the mechani neered for a series of commercials to give their p The trouble was, Mackinnon and Saunders had scale than what was needed for *Corpse Bride*—t Ping Pong ball-size required by Johnson. "It had this level before," he explains, "having the mech with the scale of these puppets. It gives us a muc replacement animation, which is a little more loo It's a little more time-consuming than replaceme more subtle and more expressive."

Initially Saunders wasn't even sure it very insistent and had more faith in our abilities right, and I'm glad he stuck to his guns because ferent from *Nightmare*." What Saunders pioneered geared mechanism inside the puppet heads, simi watch. "We ended making these very complicated open and close the jaws and a system of small pu ters to smile or frown. They have little lip paddl lips into different shapes to get convincing lip-sy sophistication packed into these tiny puppets." E the ears of the puppets, the animators could con key into the left ear and turned it in one directio left-hand side of the face; if you turned it the oth mouth on that side of the face droop down, givin vice versa on the other side.

H E L I V I N G

first Mackinnon and Saunders wanted to go for was the human characters, to have a puppet on it, to do that as replacement animation puppets, projected on the big screen." What he liked about the heads Mackinnon and Saunders had pioneered was a far greater range of expression.

They only produced them on a larger scale, tennis ball-size compared to the smaller ones that had never really been pushed to the limit. The mechanics be small enough to fit into the face, which more expressive look than the standard puppet, locked off and predetermined. It was a different animation, but the look is

what could be done. "But Mike was a bit more than perhaps we did. He was a bit more of the style of puppet is very different. The style of puppet for *Corpse Bride* was a bit different. It was similar to the workings of a Swiss watch. The heads with little gears that enable the characters to articulate the mouth. There's a good deal of

By inserting an Allen wrench into a socket in the back of the head, you can control various facial movements. If you put the wrench in the top, it would make the puppet smile on the other way it would make the corner of the mouth. To give the puppet a slightly sad expression, and



ABOVE: The final Corpse Bride figure with hair.

The result offered Johnson an a
tle emotions at his animator's disposal, wh
much more convincing performances. Whic
because Burton's preference was for big, o
close-ups. "Often, if you're working on a T
matter how many stages there are to a blin
screen they've got to give a real subtle perf
Mackinnon states. "It required teams of pe
out little eyelids and then hand stick on ey
one. We have the most beautiful sculpts of
and if you had put a heavy eyelid on it, it w
the whole face. So every element, every de
precisely, even though the viewer isn't goin
They're just going to see a character blinki
and weeks that were spent on that one blin

*OPPOSITE: The Land of the
Living cast heads. ABOVE:
Mechanical innerworks of the
latex head. BELOW: Some of
the many facial expressions
achieved with the new Allen
wrench technology.*

In all, Mackinnon and Saunders
for Corpse Bride, Victor, and Victoria. The
puppets utilized one of three different type
where the jaw simply opened and closed; c
joints that articulated the lips and the eyeb
painstaking, tricky, and complex to do as th
such as the Town Crier and Nell Van Dort,



amazing range of sub-
 ich in turn lead to
 ch was just as well,
 pen eyes and lots of
 V series it wouldn't
 k, but on the big
 "ormance,"
 ople to carefully cut
 elashes onto each
 Victor and Victoria
 ould have spoiled
 tail had to be done



g to be aware of the intricacies of the process.
 ng and not even think about the amount of hours
 k."

s produced 40 of these intricate mechanical heads
 remaining characters and remaining 160 or so
 es of head. Some were very simple skeletal heads
 others were ball-and-socket heads with tiny little
 rows, and which, Saunders says, were every bit as
 e mechanical heads. Then there were the puppets
 Victor's mother, who, as per *Nightmare*, relied on









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replacement mouths to perform a number of very different things. "We knew [Nell] was going to be a very loud, brassy character, so one of the things we're giving up is extreme subtlety," Mackinnon reflects. "We knew that Nell would have to open her mouth a lot, so we decided that replacement mouths for her would be a good idea."

Equally challenging as the mechanical aspects of the puppets was the design. Mackinnon and Saunders created for Bonejangles a character that was not just a skeleton because there was no way you could hide the substitution of a mechanical armature. Mackinnon who looked at stop-motion skeletons and learned a lot from them. "You can see right through them," he says. "Tim and Carlos would want the bones to be as realistic as possible, but they were so and delicate. There's very little holding them together. The bones are covered with skin or fabric. To make a naked skeleton it's difficult because there's no structure inside it."

"And the more Carlos pushed the design, the more we had to compromise from the original drawing. The design was interpreted to the finished puppets. If something was a little neck then that's the way it had to be developed. On a few occasions where we said, 'This is going to have to be a little more gravity with bits of metal trying to make something that the animators could use. Plus they had to be able to dance, swapping parts, and reconfiguring into different shapes.'"

Less dynamic but no less difficult was the design of the underworld, the puppets for which there was very little room to cast any material over the top. "The way we approach armatures," Mackinnon reveals, "is to make a socket armature hand painted to disguise the joints."

OPPOSITE: Details of Elder Gutknecht's hip and skull, and two views of the finished maquette. RIGHT: Detail of Mr. Bonejangles' armature, above, and the latex-covered armature below.

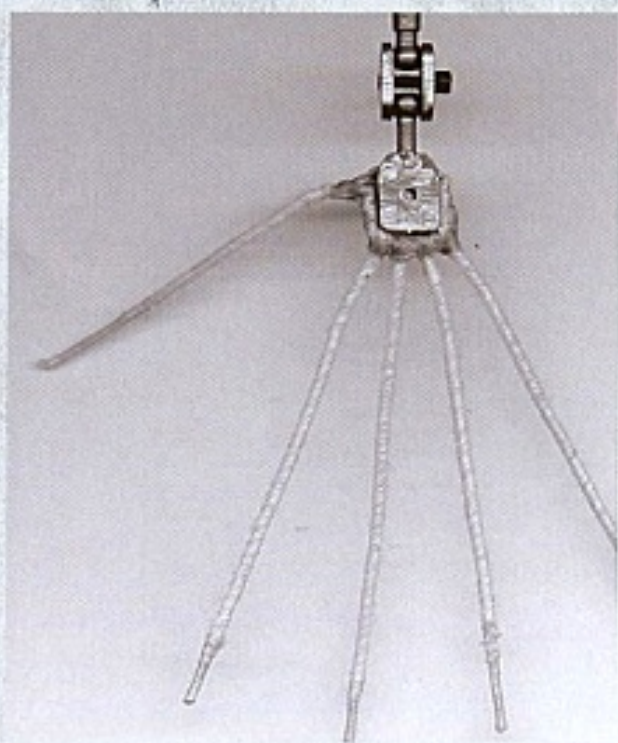
H E L I V I N G

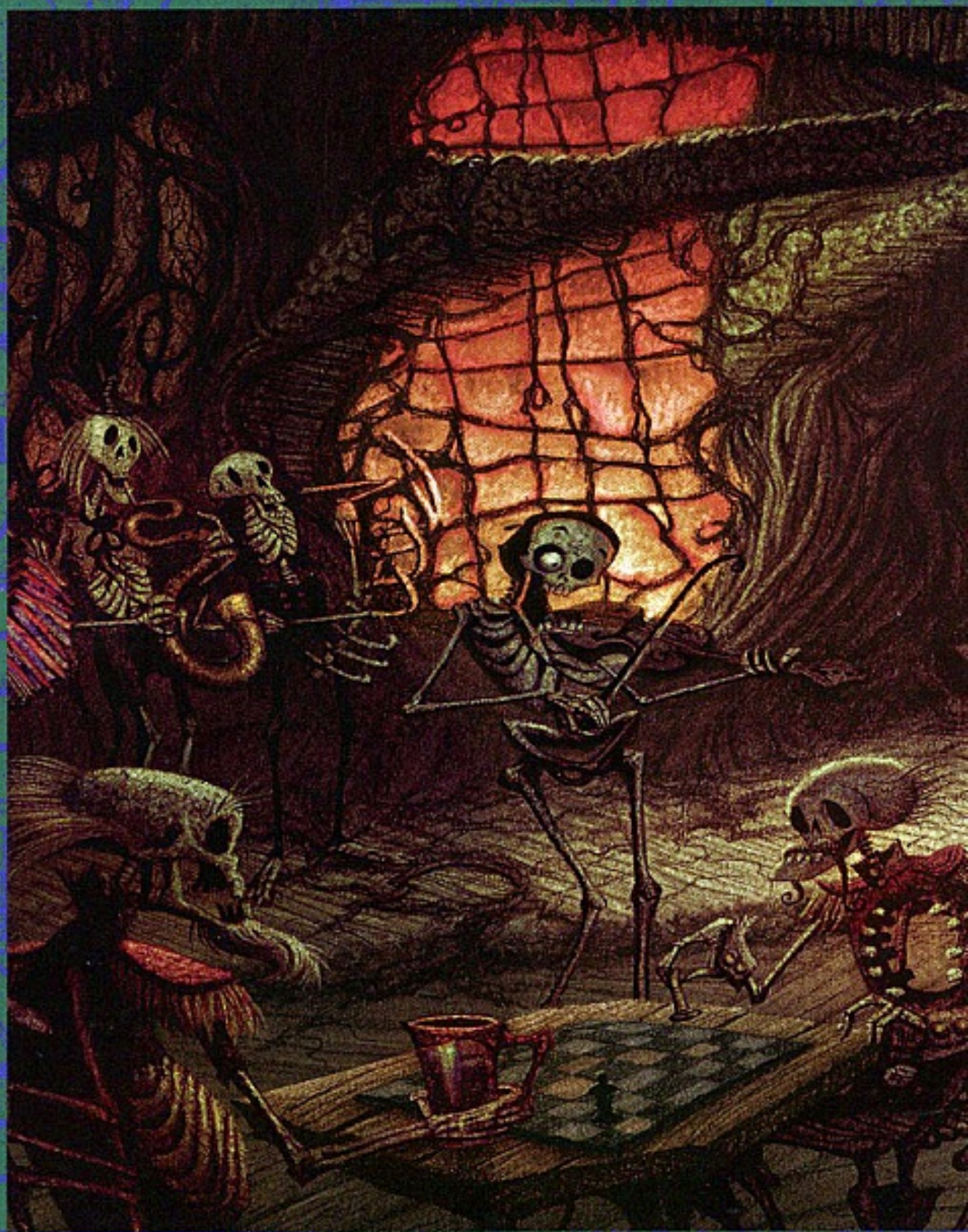
ry extreme facial expressions. "We character and with these mechanical es in the mouth shapes," Johnson her mouth to sing and yell, and we be more effective."

l heads were the skeleton puppets es and his band. "They were difficult bstructure underneath it," explains s designed by Ray Harryhausen to see the skeletons, the ribcages are open, shaved down so that they were so fine ether at times. Usually the armatures c and when you suddenly have to pro-'s no compromise to hide the metal

signs, the thinner they became. There wings that Tim did and Carlos inter-drawn with a tiny little ankle or a tiny oped as a puppet, and there were very re to change. So we were trying to defy ing that would eventually be a practical ad to do a lot; they were going to be different characters."

Elder Gutknecht, skeletal leader of e almost entirely out of brass. "There e top of it, which is quite unusual for eals. "So what you see is the ball-and-nts as much as possible."









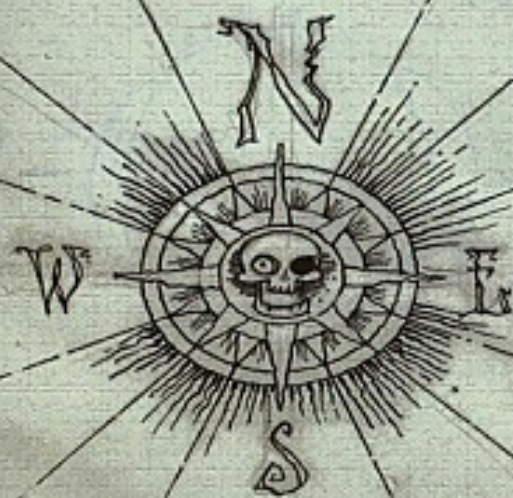


PART TWO

Land of the Dead

THE
BEYOND

Land
of the
Dead

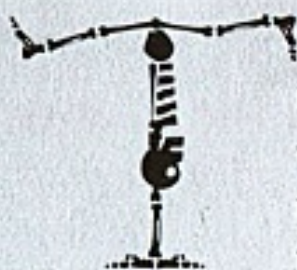


MOOR
OF THE MORTIFIED



ED

THE
LAND BEYOND BELOW



he story of *Corpse Bride* takes place in two worlds: the Land of the Living where the bride and groom reside, and the underworld to which Corpse Bride is taken during their sudden marriage.

To create these two radically different worlds, production designer Alex McDowell and art director Nathan Crowley spent a total three months working in Los Angeles with a team of concept artists, including Huy Vu, Luc Desmarcay, and

using Burton's original sketches and Tim Burton's Grangel's drawings as their inspiration. "We had a sense of what the world should be," says McDowell. "We have a strong character design sense. The characters have to look enigmatic."

Both thematic and visual, the film is a vision, with the Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead are lifeless, hopeless, and so very different. "We have vivacious dead people with a sense of humor. That designwise, McDowell was very open with different ideas. "I was very big open sky and just getting something that



Designing Worlds

place in two very distinct
where Victor, Victoria, and
and the Land of the Dead,
the Bride takes Victor after

at environments, produc-
Welson Lowry spent an ini-
team of designers and
helier, and Simón Varela,
etches and Carlos

r templates. "Tim's original ideas gave us a
ould be like," Lowry explains. "Once you
sign, the world follows closely behind it. The
nbedded in the background."

ally and visually, *Corpse Bride* is about inver-
Living a gray, dead place where the people
sad, while the Land of the Dead is full of
n a lust for life and joy. As to how to present
l and his team spent a long time experiment-
t was a refinement process starting with a
trying lots of crazy stuff and distilling them
t would really work with the characters,"

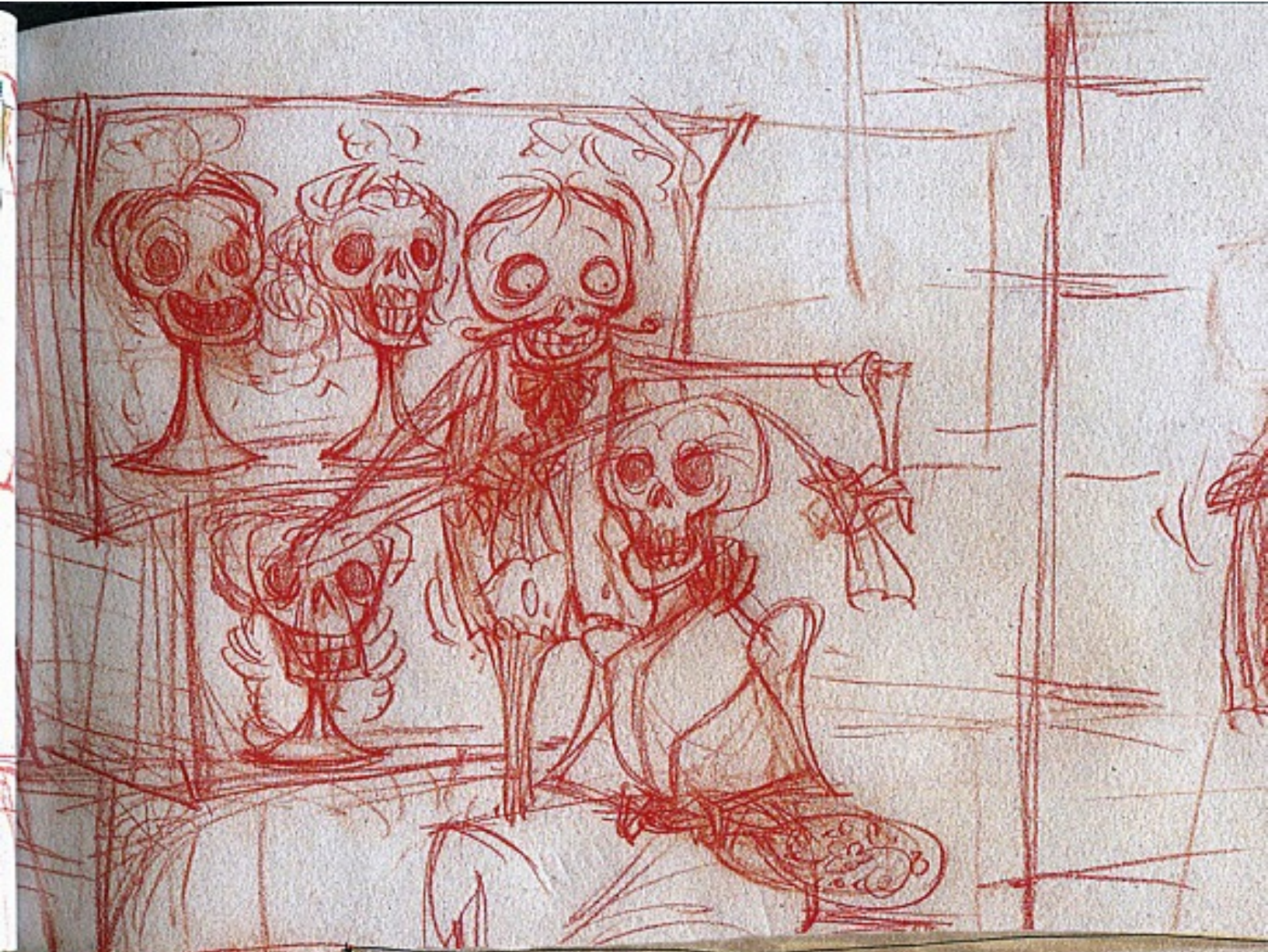


PREVIOUS PAGE: Simón Varela's illustration of the Land of the Dead. ABOVE and RIGHT: Huy Vu's underworld character concepts.

OPPOSITE: Land of the Dead map done early in production by Chris Baker. FOLLOWING PAGES: Some of the many concept drawings by Huy Vu.









Lowry recalls. "At that point Carlos was really turning out the characters, so suddenly we had a whole cast. As soon as we did anything that was too realistic and put the characters in there, they looked really kind of monstrous and odd. And if we did something too crazy and put them in, they looked too realistic. We had to find a balance."

Corpse Bride was McDowell's first time working in the field of stop-motion, and after the initial three months in Los Angeles, moved on rejoined Burton on *Charlie and the Chocolate*. Lowry, who later moved to England with the

motion requires a little less in for the audience to know a little bit. On a live-action with lots of detail but it's finding images that

One of make it into the that was to follow cal world with the Land of the Dead d Land of the Dead w tially upside down in didn't hold on to that roots as trees, for ex





to Steven Spielberg's *The Terminal*, although he *ate Factory*, handing over the design reins to the production. Unlike live-action design, stop-motion is all about the way of detail. As Lowry explains, "In order to show what they're looking at, you have to pull back a little. In animation feature you can have big extravagant models, but it doesn't really work so well in stop-motion, so we go for things that are very clean and illustrative."

McDowell's early design concepts that didn't make it into the final film but proved the creative spark for all that followed. Now was an image of a thin crust around a sphere, with the Land of the Living above the crust and the Land of the Dead directly below. "So the Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead were actually foot to foot and people were essentially living on the Land of the Dead," he states. "Although we didn't use that idea, it set a lot of ideas in motion about using a globe as a sample, so the tree above the ground became the tree below the ground."

ABOVE and LEFT: Concept sketches by Huy Vu.

OPPOSITE: Early Simón Varela illustration of the Pub in the Land of the Dead.







*ABOVE: Simón Varela's
concept illustration for the
Land of the Living forest.*

tree below the ground and there was this kind of... of the Dead is almost a pastiche of the Land of the Living, but in the Land of the Dead it's... have buildings that are sort of the decayed... color has bled down through the ground and... the Dead."

Ultimately the Land of the Living is... mixed with an Eastern European sensibility... McDowell amassed a library of books on... as Eastern European and Victorian architecture.

E B R I D E



ind of mirroring between the two lands. The Land
nd of the Living. You have a statue in the Land of
s a skeleton on a skeleton of a horse. And you
d version of the colorful version, almost like the
nd come to rest on the buildings in the Land of

ing took its design cues from Victorian England
ty, inspired by the original folktale. As reference,
18th- and 19th-century Russian painting, as well
ecture. Another prime reference source was

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Victorian-era photography, the austerity of their the various methods of the time—hand-tinted daguerotypes, glass photography with its soft focus quality—pr the design team.

“My approach generally to design is to separate elements and hope, by sort of thrusting them together, get something fresh out of the collision of these two worlds,” says McDowell, who was very keen to give the film an old-world feel. “There’s no Victorian architecture, as we used to see in Eastern Europe. So what we did was take Eastern European architecture and put them together with the Victorian look so that it’s not fully, that is neither Moscow nor London.” Even the architecture was based on real buildings, with the Church of the Living actually inspired by one in Kutna Hora just outside Prague. “There’s an ossuary there, an old bone church, and it’s got a



feel to stay in it. You want to stay in it. It’s got them a lot. It’s got

the Living. Victor himself. Lowry produced a children’s the imp “We th

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subjects, coupled with
 guerreotypes and
 moving a real boon to

to take relatively dis-
 sem together, that you
 things," says

in Eastern European
 understand it, in
 n European elements
 o it has an edge, hope-
 so, some of the struc-
 ch in the Land of the

st outside Prague, in the Czech Republic.
 and all the architecture around there has that
 it," says Lowry. "But we were very careful
 away from any religious symbols. We didn't
 o have any Christian symbols in it, so we left
 ll out. You know they're in a church because
 big stained-glass windows and turrets."

Another key location in the Land of
 ing is the dark, foreboding forest in which
 heads off to practice his vows, only to find
 "married" to Corpse Bride. According to
 it was illustrator Simón Varela who pro-
 a series of initial sketches that were very
 n's storybook in tone and which provided
 etus for the look and feel of the woods.
 ought it might be nice to do humped hills



*OPPOSITE: Rigger Gary
 Faulkner putting finishing
 touches on the Land of the
 Living woods. ABOVE: The
 Everglot Mansion under con-
 struction.*







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with very linear straight trees and be very illustrative, very much like an illustration. It was painted to look like we were trying not to make it look like *Nightmare on Elm Street* or *Sleepy Hollow*. We used a couple of very simple trees, and long, thin black trees, with an occasional ferns down at the base of the trees. We just tried

This description could also pertain to another of Lowry's favorite sets, which plays host to the show and which started off filled with pictures, antlers, and clutter was stripped back to reflect their financial situation. This big airplane-hangar kind of feel to it and is really a way, but it's very elegant and beautiful at the same time. We got a really nicely proportioned set of stairs that could

While the Land of the Living was based

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ative with that," he says. "So the forest is
 look like an illustration, but at the same time
 re, obviously, trying not to make it look like
 motifs: mounds of snow and dirt, upturned
 flourish of Tim Burton-esque curls and
 to keep it simple, very clean, and graphic."
 the entrance hall of the Everglot mansion,
 to the film's first major musical number
 and chandeliers hanging in it before the
 status in the story, namely, broke. "It's got
 really dreary and empty and feels horrible in
 me time. I think that set's gorgeous and has
 come down the center of it."
 ed in different versions of reality, the design

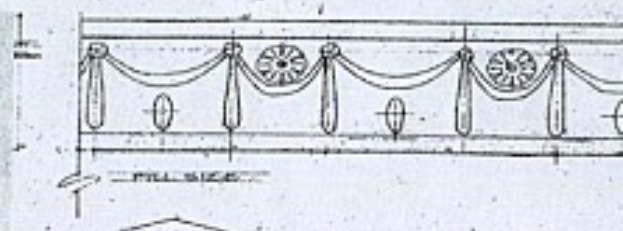
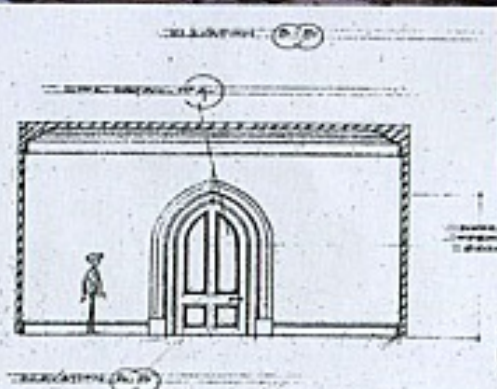
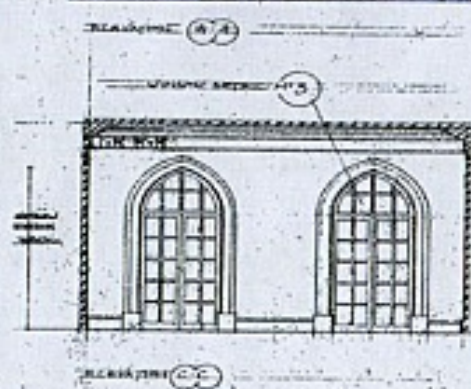
*OPPOSITE: Land of the
 Living town square concept
 by Luc Desmarchelier.
 ABOVE: Color study of the
 bridge by Luc Desmarchelier.
 FOLLOWING PAGES:
 Three concept drawings by
 Chris Baker of the Everglot's
 foyer and the final set.*



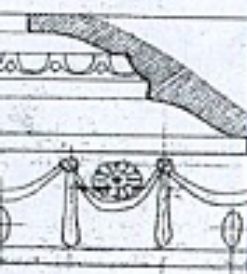








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of the Land of the Dead was restrained solely by although Lowry says the production was keen to vision of the afterlife seen in countless movies, as Burton had created for *Beetlejuice*. "What we wanted was something that didn't feel like Hell, that didn't feel like a cave that didn't feel like a big cave with stalactites," he wanted it to be a little bit poetic, so we kept it ve

Inspiration came from an unlikely source: a skull off of bone. "The architecture has bonelike qualities," says McDowell, "but all of the flesh that remains on it is made of layers of colors. So you have these very nice kind of bright lilacs underneath purples, all reminiscent of

The illustrator who helped capture the look of the Land of the Dead was Neil Ross. "He really captured the feel that Tim and Mike wanted for the Land of the Dead," he says. "We ended up designing a mysterious dark, claustrophobic geography in the sense. So they could be in one corner and be in a completely different place the next moment."

One of the underworld's highlights is the library of Elder Gutknecht to whom Victor and Victoria go to seek his advice on how to reenter the Land of the Dead. Ideas for the set included a simple black void, filled with a gold sphere and old medical instruments. The design was pared down and simplified to little more than a cage at the top of a tower, piled high with books, papers, and old scientific instruments, and on a number of different levels so that the spirit of Gutknecht could crawl up around on them.

"Some of the first sketches [for it] look beautiful on paper," Lowry recalls. "It was all these

OPPOSITE: Victoria's Bedroom set; concept, plans, and final constructed set. ABOVE: Nelson Lowry with Victor on the Land of the Dead set. BELOW RIGHT: Scale model of the Grand Hallway set.

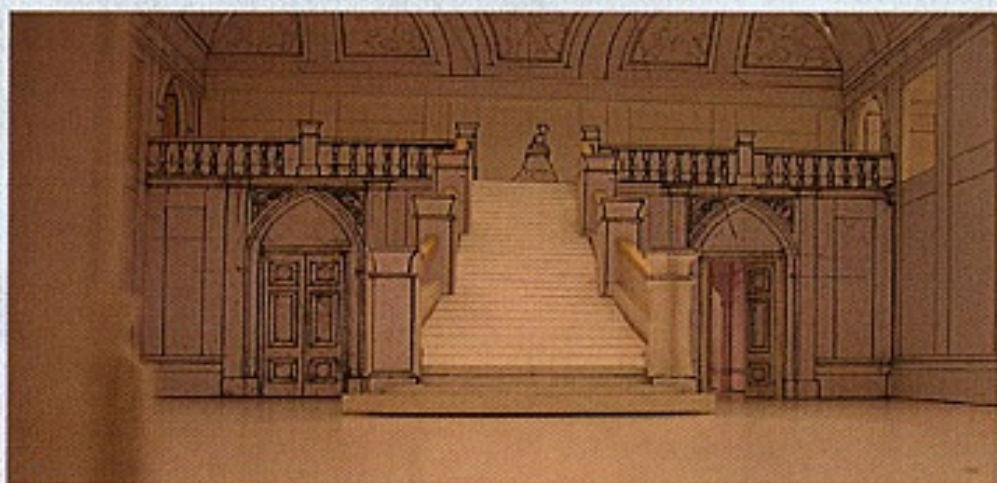
T H E D E A D

by the imagination, avoid the clichéd as well as the one wanted was some- the Middle Earth, e says. "We very mysterious." urce: flesh rotting ty," states t has these strong d of popping of of flesh."

the eventual look of seemed to get the ne Dead," Lowry place with splashes of color, without any one place one minute and walk around a next. It played well that way."

the book-filled Victoria pay a visit the Living. Initial ed with a huge sign was distilled the top of a huge ntific instruments, nderlike

ked absolutely se floating books



and desks and everything was in a swirl, but it didn't look like rubbish, you couldn't tell what you were looking at, in a sense of a real place, especially in stop-motion. When you look at it and think, I know what that is, I can't help but have to be standing on floors and walking through the real world." As does another Land of the Dead scene in which Victor gets his first taste of life in the underworld, from Gaudí, old English pubs, and even a Moroccan bazaar, but one Lowry feels "comes together nicely."

Uniqueness was, in fact, Lowry's goal for the production. "There are so many fantasy films out there that have been done before, and I wanted to create a fresh, original world that would justify its existence as a real sight and thing. The Dead World is an early attempt to be a new and more plane of existence. Some of the things brought them to the dead world."

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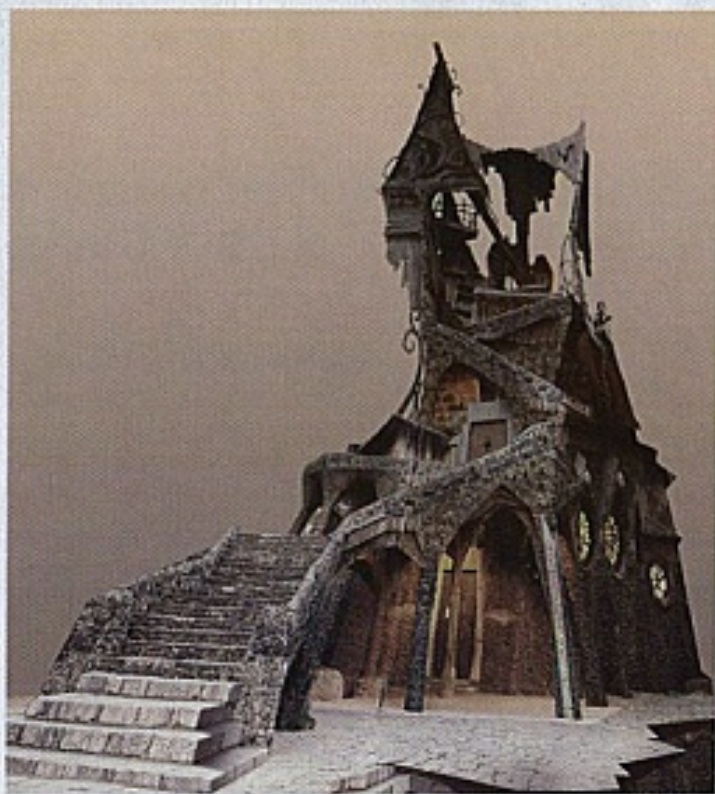


B R I D E

when we tried to represent that on film it was like you were looking at. You really need a reference point because the audience has to be able to visualize it. I imagine myself there, and the characters walking through doors, it has to have references to real-world locations. The Dead location, the Ball and Socket pub in the underworld, which took inspiration from Moroccan mud look. A weird concoction of styles. It has a really unique feel to it."

It was a battle cry throughout *Corpse Bride's* production, that there, so much beautiful work being done, that it's hard to be original. But I wanted to be able to take even a little section of the film and immediately identify it as *Corpse Bride*. I wanted it to have a signature feel that imbued every frame, that was both Land of the Living and Land of the Dead. Pete Kozachik, the DP, made a good point during production, that they couldn't be different films, it had to be the same film, we couldn't just be totally crazy and make the Land of the Dead feel like this other world, so we tried to tie some of the stuff together. Some of the designs of the chairs of the furniture we brought to the Land of the Dead and just skewed them a bit, so there would be a connection, as if the Living had brought them down."

While the Land of the Living is, thematically, a much grayer, more desaturated place than the Land of the Dead, the juxtaposition was carried

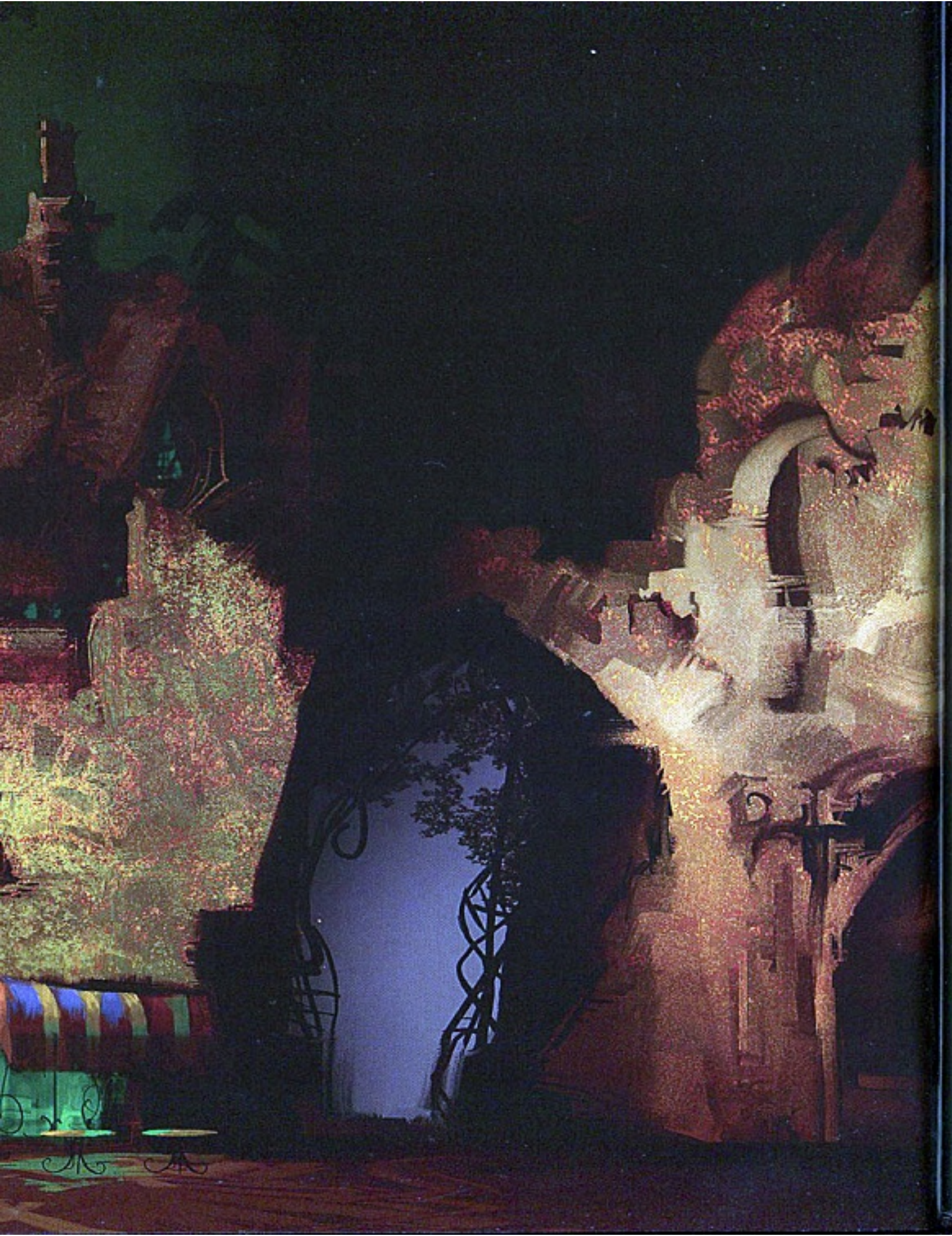


ABOVE: Land of the Dead building. LEFT: Concept illustration of Elder Gutknecht's study by Neil Ross. OPPOSITE: Land of the Dead color study by Luc Desmarchelier.









L A N D O F

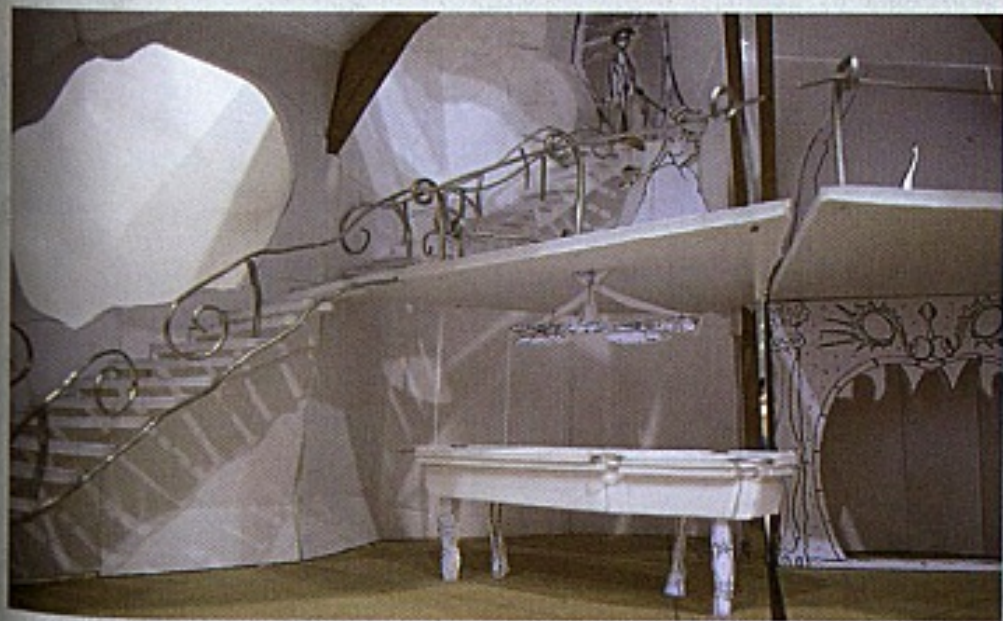


OPPOSITE and ABOVE: Land of the Dead concepts by Neil Ross. BELOW: Fifth-scale maquette for the Land of the Dead Pub set.

through in terms of its color palette, too. While it was filmed in black and white, McDowell notes that, "it definitely has a range of color. It's just a very muted tonal scales. It's monochromatic, but you do have colors that are kind of washed out." In contrast the *Land of the Dead* was inspired, in no small measure, by the films of Italian

Burton's, particularly his 1963 *Curse of the Living Dead* (1963), "Bava," Lowry says. "He has a lot of these incredibly strong lurid colors, like violets and greens cutting in, and those films and were definitely

Once the design for the set was approved, the next stage was drafting plans for their construction. "My favorite part," he says. "I love doing a bunch of drawings and an a



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had originally been suggested that it be
 "The key is that it isn't black and white. It
 ted range and compressed to the end of the
 e violets, browns, and blues. And the blacks
 the Dead has a lush, lurid color scheme
 ian director Mario Bava, a big favorite of
 3 film *Black Sabbath* and
 66). "Tim loves Mario
 lot of noir films with
 colors in them, a lot of
 so we looked at a lot of
 ly inspired by them."
 or each set was locked in
 was for Lowry to begin
 uction. "That's my
 being turned loose with
 rt department." He

*BELOW: The final Land of
 the Dead Pub set with Victor.*



began by producing a series of detailed drawings, turning concepts into solid blueprints, and building a scale model, "important for the previsualization process, to get a sense of what it is they're going to be shooting and giving the animator access."

And yet it was also a period of intense research, and he grabbed ferns, bushes, branches, and plants, "with the real intent of making sets out of them," he says, "and creating this organic, mysterious under-



drawings, hiring draftspersons to translate the con-
series of fifth-scale maquettes, which he says were
allowing Burton and Johnson "to get their head
ng and how that stuff interfaces onto the stage with

experimentation. "We went out back of the studio
plaster and just started making things without any
e continues, "just to get the artists' hands working
erworld." These models were then lit and pho-

tographed to see what worked, what didn't,
and what could be exploited further, with
the art department building another series
of fifth-scale models which were again lit
and photographed, this time with little
character stand-ins. After which Lowry's art
department would produce a series of full-
scale mock-ups, at which stage the size of
the sets began to become very apparent. "It
was hard, initially, for everybody to wrap
their head around the fact that these sets
were going to be so big," he notes.

The reason was a simple matter
of scale. The puppets were, on average, 18
to 20 inches tall, with Pastor Galswell top-
ping two feet, far larger than those used in
Nightmare, a result of their heads having to
be a certain size to incorporate Mackinnon
and Saunders' complex mechanisms, which
in turn dictated how big the bodies had to



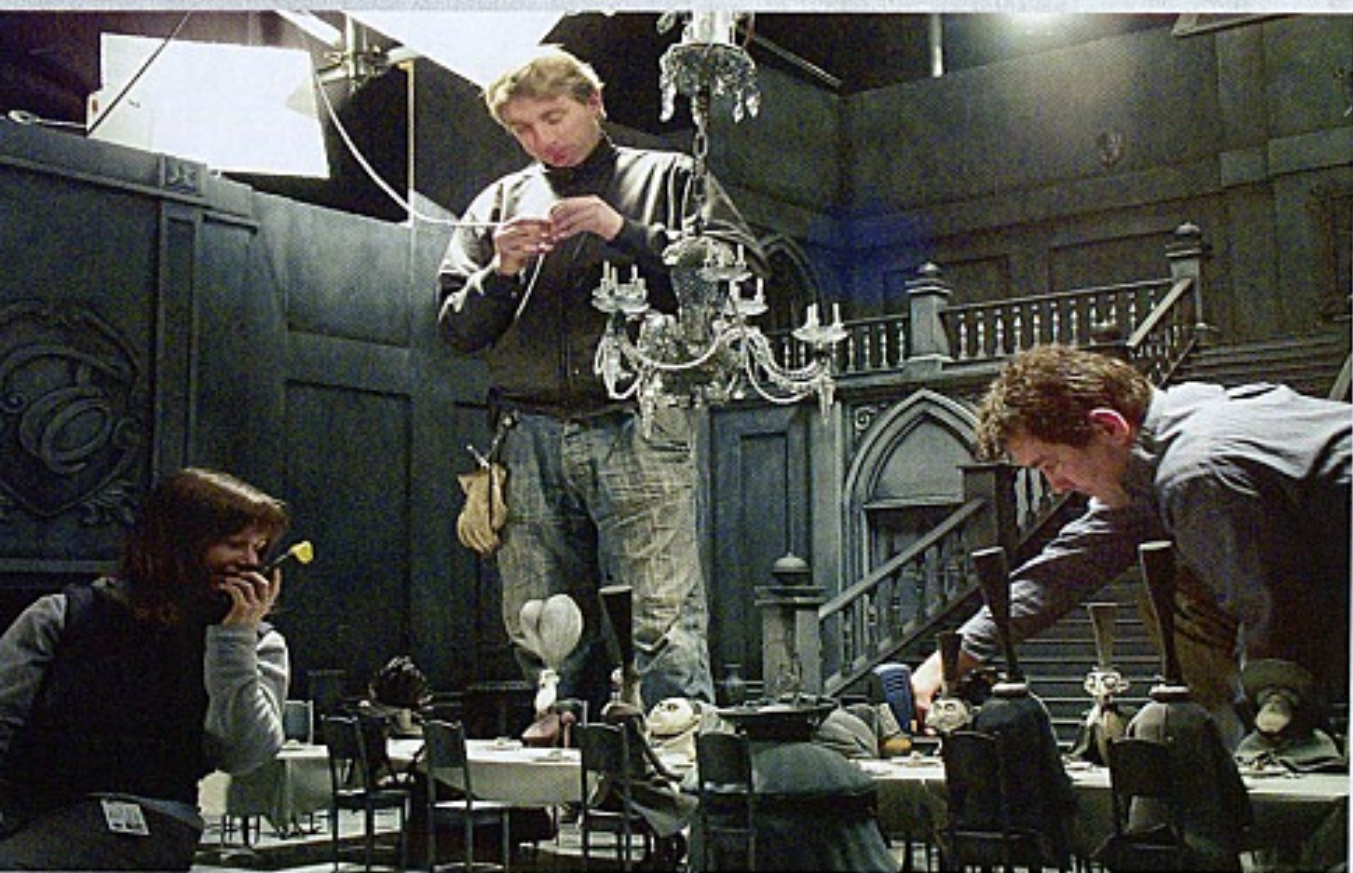
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be. "The puppets got a little bit bigger and exponentially the sets get bigger," says Lowry. "It meant more stage space, more materials, more lighting."

Indeed, more of everything in fact. All told the production had around 36 sets running at any one time, with Lowry estimating they built 50 in total, although that included duplicate sets, since the production had so much to shoot and Johnson would often shoot duplicate puppets on duplicate sets. The largest of which was the Land of the Living town square which measured 40 feet by 60 feet and about 12 feet high. "I remember one day when we were working on it, I went in to take some pictures and there were 20 people on one stop-motion set including lighting people and camera people. It was an action set, there were so many people on it." He says the "stop-motion look" that is unlike anything seen before in the scenes where Victor is running through the town square was composited into a small scale set, but he wasn't. He says the animators were either popping up through trap doors in the set every time they took a frame. But it gives the stop-motion sets are very claustrophobic and small. The production used screen and matte paintings and some wild camera

OPPOSITE: The set workshop at Three Mills Studio, London. ABOVE: Lighting Camera Melissa Byers, Electrician Andy Green, and Rigger Gary Faulkner working on the Entrance Hall/Wedding Reception set.

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—usually there's three or four, and that's
 was amazing. It almost looked like a live-
 believes the sets give the film "a live-action
 fore, not even in *Nightmare*. "There are
 square at night and you imagine he must be
 He was running across a huge stage and the
 doors or on knee pads getting up on to the
 world a lot of volume. Traditionally stop-
 is has big open vistas. And with some green
 moves, we've got even more space."

A Digital Revolution

With stop-motion animation techniques, O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen, neither of whom had evolved much. In fact, Johnson had been plying Mitchell cameras that had been used for *Kurosawa* shooting was due to start, the decision was made to shoot *Bride* digitally. Since stop-motion necessitated the use of a still camera, specifically a Mitchell, why not use a still camera, specifically a Mitchell?

"I was really wanting to do this," says Johnson, "of photography Pete Kozachik. 'I was always



es hardly changing since the days of Willis
 ther has the camera equipment used to shoot it
 planning to employ the same type of 35 mm
King Kong in the 1930s. But three weeks before
 made to abandon film entirely and shoot *Corpse*
 tes capturing one frame at a time, the thought had
 lly a digital still camera, instead.

for the longest time," says *Corpse Bride* director
 says thinking I wish we could shoot without the
 problems of film because animation isn't
 really suited for film. Film behaves funnily at
 night. It cools down and the next morning
 you come in and it gives you a different
 color. Or light leaks that would never be
 noticed in live action take their toll over
 time. But when I joined the show, the path
 was pretty much set. We were going to shoot
 it on film, and that was it, because all the
 money had been spent. Then we got our-
 selves a patron saint over at Warner Bros. by
 the name of Chris DeFaria who said, 'Why
 aren't you shooting this on digital? Why
 don't you give it a try?'"

So that's exactly what Kozachik
 did. He went out and bought half a dozen
 high-end, consumer digital SLR cameras, ran
 a series of tests with them, eventually set-

LEFT: The digital camera's small size and ability to shoot upside down made it possible to use as the business end of a periscope lens. Tim Allen animates as the camera tracks down the length of dining table.

OPPOSITE: Peter Sorg makes final check on an expressionistic Land of the Dead set.

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ting on the Canon EOS-1 Mark II as his camera for Burton who said, Go for it.

Production on *Corpse Bride* began on July 1, 2005. And the benefits of shooting digital

"We were able to turn shots around the next day to see if a shot or test was approved," remarks the director. "By eleven, by two o'clock you were done. And for us that was huge, because we were able to do as many tests as possible before Mike would say no."

The technological advances also helped. Before *Christmas*, the animators only had the



camera of choice, then projected the results

on June 1, 2004, and lasted through until
digitally turned out to be enormous.

and in a few hours as opposed to waiting a
recalls producer Allison Abbate. "If the test
re shooting another test or doing the shot.
very picky and we took advantage of as
ay it's ready to go."

helped out the animators. "On *The Nightmare*
the ability to see three frames at a time," Abbate
continues. "Now, through tiny video taps
fed into separate computer screens, they
have the ability to see the whole shot as
they animate it. Mike could approve things
on those video taps and know that the act-
ing is right or there's no light pop. That, to
me, is amazing. I don't know how they used
to animate with three frames. Now they can
see the whole entire shot and know how
things are progressing."

The irony is not lost on Johnson.
"It's interesting," he notes, "because a lot of
people thought that computers and digital
technology would be the death of stop-
motion animation but really it's bringing it
forward."

Another benefit was that the
compact nature of the digital cameras com-

pared to traditional film cameras meant that the camera rigs could get in much closer to the puppets.

"Tim loves close-ups and often times the bulky film camera couldn't get close enough to get the shot," Abbate reveals. "Here we were able to get right up to the characters' faces and hold the focus and allow the animators to act their little hearts out. Animator access is very important, too, when an animator has to get up and down a set 50 to 100 times a shot, having smaller more versatile cameras really helped."

For art director Nelson Lowry, shooting digitally meant he could check on, and, if necessary, correct the look of any frame almost immediately.

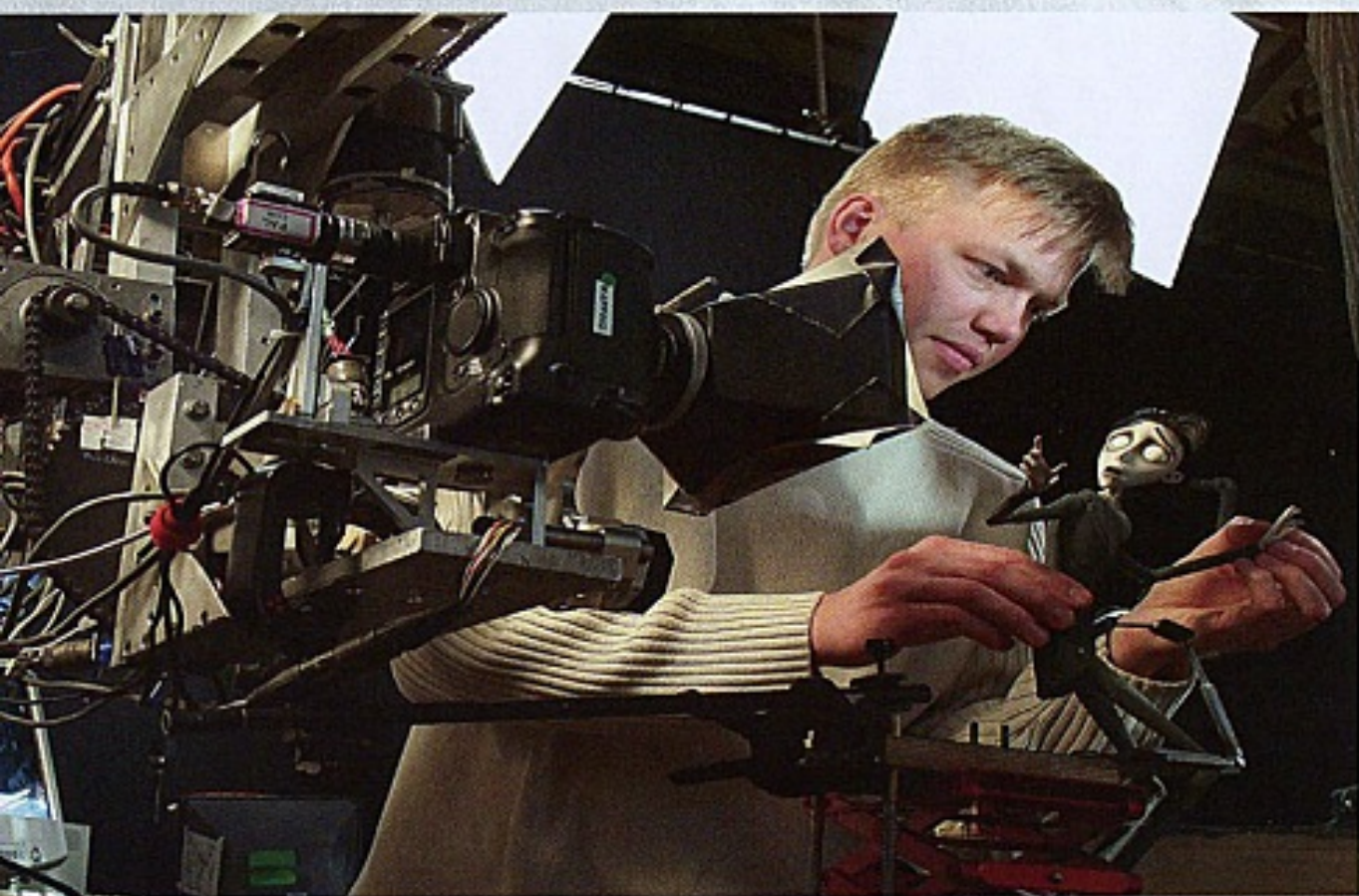
"From sitting at my desk I can get a frame sent through the server onto my computer," he says. "I can make the changes, print it out, and bring it to a dresser and take as short as half an hour, whereas in the past it would take a week back; you'd have to see dailies. I was able to tweak things and turn them back over to the dressers and get the look I wanted."

More than that, Lowry was also able to preview shots with green screen shots, sliding in a temporary image to see what a shot was going to end up looking like. "So when they're in the station on set, they were also looking at a rough cut of the shot."

OPPOSITE: Extreme close-ups are possible because of the puppets larger scale.

RIGHT: Animator Brian Hansen with Victor. The dSLR camera aboard a motion control rig and fitted out with focus drive, matte box, and video tap, appears to intimidate the puppet.





came from almost any unit that's out there
ays. "I can augment it in Photoshop, make
and say it should look like this, and that can
it would take days. You'd have to get film
k stuff very quickly and very precisely and
ook I wanted."

o put together a quick composite to use
mage allowing Johnson and Burton to see
o the first time they saw a shot on the light-
gh composite."

The Voice Cast

While it's the animators who give physical production stage, one infinitesimal move appropriate and expressive voice to make them truly really make the performance," says codirector the two that makes a great final shot."

"To make that love triangle between able, to make the audience really believe Victor some serious actors," explains producer Allison



Grant, Tracey Ullman, Joanna Lumley, Jane

"I was extremely lucky to get the matter is, it's a fairly low-budget movie," But to do voices for the love of the project because when you see real great actors, professional any hoopla."

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cal life to the stop-motion puppets on the pro-
ment at a time, each character needs an appro-
uly come alive. "You need both elements to
or Mike Johnson. "It really is a combination of

reen Victor, Victoria, and Corpse Bride believ-
ctor is meant to be with Victoria, you needed
on Abbate, "and we have great voices. We have
an amazingly illustrious group to tap into. They're
mall voices, they're very subtle, understated
voices—no one is the genie from *Aladdin*."

Needless to say, Burton was able to
attract a glittering array of acting talent to *Corpse
Bride*, with his voice cast including an Oscar win-
ner, several Oscar nominees, as well as a number
of acclaimed comedians. Although several of the
cast—Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter,
Albert Finney, Christopher Lee, and Michael
Gough who had played Alfred the Butler in
Burton's two Batman films—had worked with
Burton before, there were many who were new to
his world, among them Emily Watson, Richard E.
Horrocks, and Paul Whitehouse.

ese actors on this movie, because, the fact of the
ton says. "I was lucky and grateful to get people
use they're amazing actors and it excites you
people, coming in and doing something without

*LEFT: Black Widow voiced
by Jane Horrocks and Maggot
voiced by Enn Reitel.*

*OPPOSITE: Johnny Depp as
Victor and Helena Bonham
Carter as Corpse Bride.*

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To voice the Corpse Bride herself, Helena Bonham Carter, whose credits include *Planet of the Apes*, *Big Fish*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, an animated film and Tim said if you do that one you're dead. "I thought it'd be more interesting to play Yzma," she says. "Tim is Burton's partner and mother of their son, but I thought it'd be more interesting to play a villain. I did *the Were-Rabbit*, but in the end Burton really wanted me for the role. 'It's like counterdiscrimination,' he said. 'You're a woman and he was a bit coy about asking me. But after about two weeks, he asked me to be Corpse Bride. It's very romantic.'

"I find watching animated films to be more fun than in most live-action movies," Bonham Carter says. "I've written ten script and I always find that the better the

"To have Christopher Lee do a voice, it's amazing," he continues. "And Michael Gough. When I see that character, Elder Gutknecht, and I hear Michael Gough's voice I feel very emotional. It's nice to personalize it as much as you can with these things and I've always been lucky with actors, but [here] I have such an amazing cast. You can say this about any voice in an animated film, that they do bring it to life. But when you're talking about these puppets and you see these people, they're like the animators breathing life into them. And that to me is magical."

Of course, Burton called upon acclaimed British actress Genevieve Williams for *Fight Club* and *Howards End* as well as for *The Chocolate Factory*. "I was doing another animation and he said, 'You can't do mine,'" laughs Bonham Carter, who played Victoria in *Corpse Bride*. "Originally I think he saw me as Victoria, because I sort of played Victoria in *Nick Park's Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit*, even if he made Bonham Carter audition for it," she laughs. "I had to do about a two-hour audition but I said, 'No, fine, I'll do it.' So I did and luckily, he chose me for *Corpse Bride*. He was very formal about it. I think

that the scripts and characterizations are better than most," Carter continues. "This has a very beautifully written script. The writing is clearer than the character is. And

OPPOSITE: The Everglots: Joanna Lumley as Maudeline and Albert Finney as Finis. RIGHT: Victoria Everglot played by Emily Watson. BELOW: The Van Dorts: Paul Whitehouse as William and Tracey Ullman as Nell.

Corpse Bride is somebody who is frozen in time. She's eternally young, which is a nice paradox with being so aged in her body. There's a genuine innocence to her and a purity and an openness. I love doing these things because in a way it's pure, pure acting. It's like radio. It's so nice to act something where it's not dependent on what you look like, so you completely create a character and you're not limited by your physical appearance. It's very liberating that way."

As Victor, Burton cast Johnny Depp, with whom he'd collaborated on *Edward Scissorhands*, *Ed Wood*, and *Sleepy Hollow*. Depp recorded his part while the pair were



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ere again working together on *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. “He hadn’t done an animated film before,” Burton notes. “But whether it’s live-action or animation, he always brings so much to it. What was really strange is that the character was designed a long time before I asked Johnny to do it, but it reminded me of him. So I felt quite lucky that there was a certain kind of karmic connection between the two.”

“Victor does look a little like me,” agrees Depp, “kind of a stretched-out version. It’s strange. Victor’s this poor thing, kind of a nervous wreck, extremely uptight, extremely polite bumbler. He’s an

accident waiting to happen. It's a fascinating doing it and with certain people, Tim being like...' and they can stop the sentence there, out reading the script, but I read the script and loved the fact that stop-motion was all but dead it alive. It's a very specific look, it's a lot different involved in it and in the process is just fascinating.

While the majority of actors recall issues, codirector Mike Johnson says they did. Finney, who voice Victoria's parents Maude was great," he says. "You could really feel that due to Tim. I think people get really excited to me they're having a lot of fun with the voice."

The Animators

Stop-motion requires an extraordinarily large number of animators involved. "I'm just gob-smacked by the Bonham Carter. "Their patience is staggering and the concentration."

Before a scene can even be filmed, it's called a "block through" or a "pop through" animation supervisor Anthony Scott, another kind of just pop the puppets into different positions then shown to codirector Mike Johnson for shooting a more detailed rehearsal that is a go-ahead to animate.

Animating a character such as C is a lot of concentration and labor on behalf of the animators.

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process. Tim asked me if I'd be interested in right at the top of the list, they say, 'Would you because you're in. So I would have done it with- and loved it. It's a great piece of writing. Also I lying until Tim dove in there, and he's really kept erent from CG and, as a viewer, I prefer it. To be nating."

rded their parts individually due to scheduling id manage to get Joanna Lumley and Albert line and Finis Everglot, in a room together. "It ne chemistry. We've got a great cast and it's all about it when they see the visuals, and it seems oices."

immense amount of patience on behalf of the ked by their craftsmanship," says Helena g and the minutia and the sort of exclusivity of ed, each animator will have to do a series of tests " of each shot. "It's a real simple test," says ani- *The Nightmare Before Christmas* veteran, "we positions to get an idea for timing." These are approval before the animators move on to gain shown to Johnson who, if satisfied, gives the

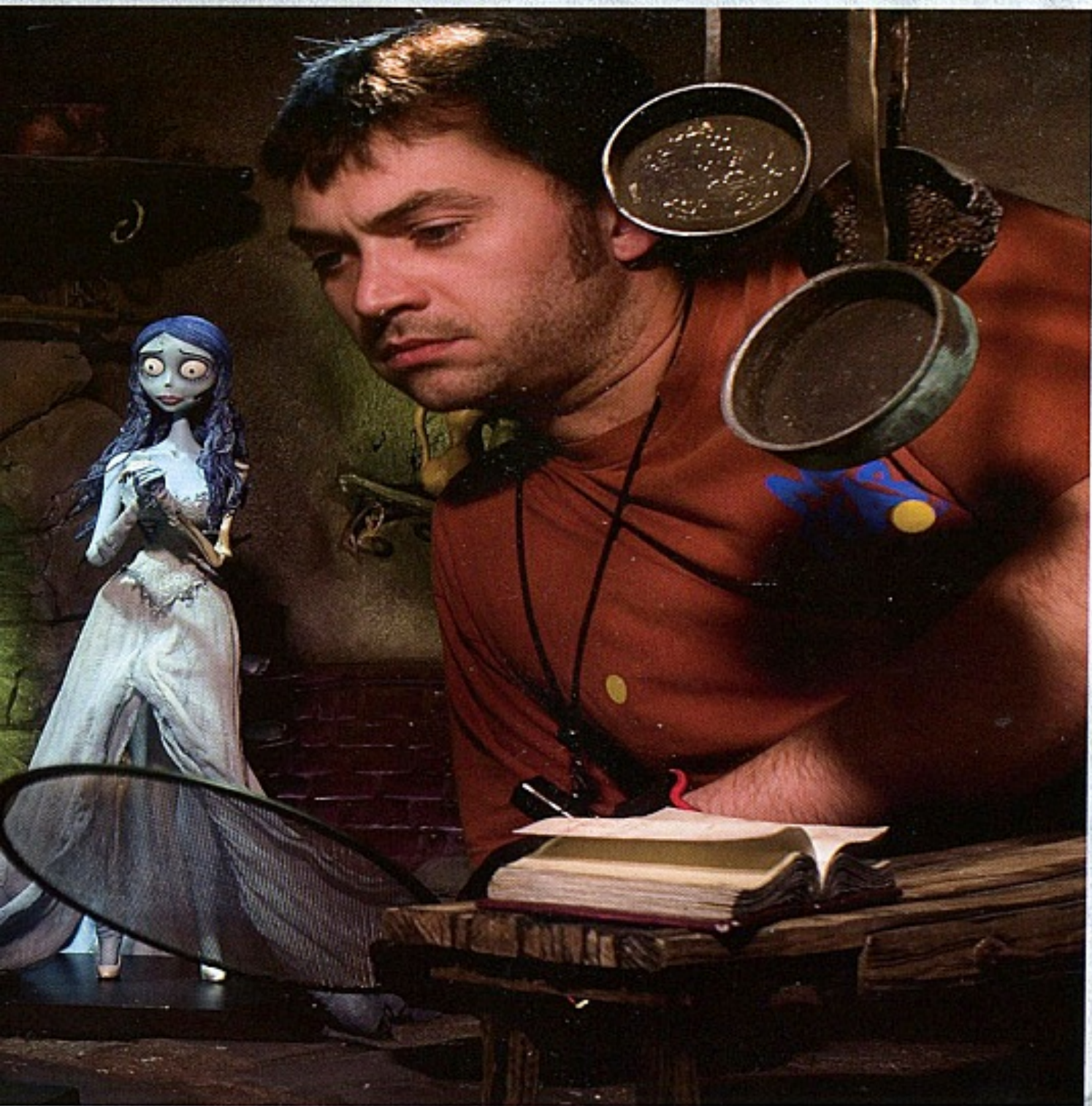
corpse Bride herself, required an added degree of imators because of the numerous moving ele-

OPPOSITE: Electrician A. J. Walters on Land of the Dead kitchen set.

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ments involved with her puppet, including her hair, her dress, and her veil.

"Fabric is a pretty tough thing," explains Scott. "Fabrics are very difficult to control, so a lot of testing has been involved with that. You don't want to use too much wire to control it, because it fights you. Sometimes we have rigs flowing through the dress to look like it's blowing wind. Sometimes we put weights on the end of the dress just to hold it down, so the animator doesn't have to fight it too much. There's a whole series of tricks to get her to look the way that we want her to look and move."

Corpse Bride's veil, too, was equally complicated. "We have wires that go through the fabric which are virtually invisible," says animation supervisor Graham Maiden. "And there's wiring all through the dress like dried flowers, but they're actually metal. The simple veil with a tiara has probably taken at least a month to get working correctly."

When several animators are working on a scene, Maiden's role as animation supervisor is to make sure the characters move in a believable way. "We did some style guides before the production where they 'run' the puppets and get up to speed," he says. Dale. "That helps to get everyone sort of on the same page. It has a big influence as well in that. We have the storyboarders say what the characters are doing in that scene. But it's not just the animators who have to all be in agreement as to what the character

OPPOSITE: Animator Charlotte Worsaae manipulates Victoria's brow. RIGHT: Animator Brian Demoskoff with Corpse Bride on her wedding march is accompanied by an overhead motion-control rig carrying rim lights to keep the veil glowing.

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challenging. "There are a series of wires
visible," says character maintenance super-
e way around them. Plus her tiaras look
at took several months to develop. Just a
ast nine to ten months to develop, to get it

on the same character, it's Scott's responsi-
character remains consistent throughout.
started and every animator has a period
l with the characters," says animator Philip
same page with the characters. And Mike
oryboards that show us the scene and what
t just movement. It's *how* they move. You
eter is trying to achieve in the scene and that

influences how you do your blocks and what an animator, part of it comes from Mike, and you

In terms of approaching each scene of working. "Some will act out before the show, piece together a performance that way. Some do it," Dale reveals. "But it's useful having the visual as to how the performance should be. It's acting because then you're having to create everything, sort of emotion there is in the scene, and so it

Keeping the puppets in the best possibility of character maintenance supervisor G. The puppet will last is dictated by a variety of factors, he reveals. "Some animators have very acid skin on the puppet and can destroy the foam and discolour the world have got acidic skin and can't tell. They

Fortunately for those animators, the puppets means they're longer lasting than the old affect them too badly. The silicone doesn't discolour last more than a shot."

Equally important but in a wholly different access—how the animators physically interact with has to be able to reach the puppet and reach the construction manager for *Corpse Bride*. "We take designing a set. It's extremely important because if the animator can't get at the puppet, it becomes useless. We will, occasionally, get a change in the script that we didn't expect. Then we might have a piece can be taken out."

Set shift, too, is a major issue in s

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Mike tells you. So part of it comes from the
you try and find a common ground there.”
ne, every animator will have a different method
ot, others will videotape themselves and try and
e animators sort of just go for it and sort of feel
voice track, because that gives you so many cues
ually harder when you don’t have dialogue,
ing. Whereas you can tell from the voice what
it gives you a lot to pin your animation on.”
ossible shape for the animators is the responsi-
raham Maiden and his team. How long a pup-
“. “It all depends on the animator and the shot,”
skin. It bleaches out of their hands and onto the
or the fabrics. Some of the best animators in the
y’re called curry fingers.”

the silicone skin used to cover the Corpse Bride
ose covered by foam latex. “The acid doesn’t
iscolor so quickly. If it was foam, they wouldn’t

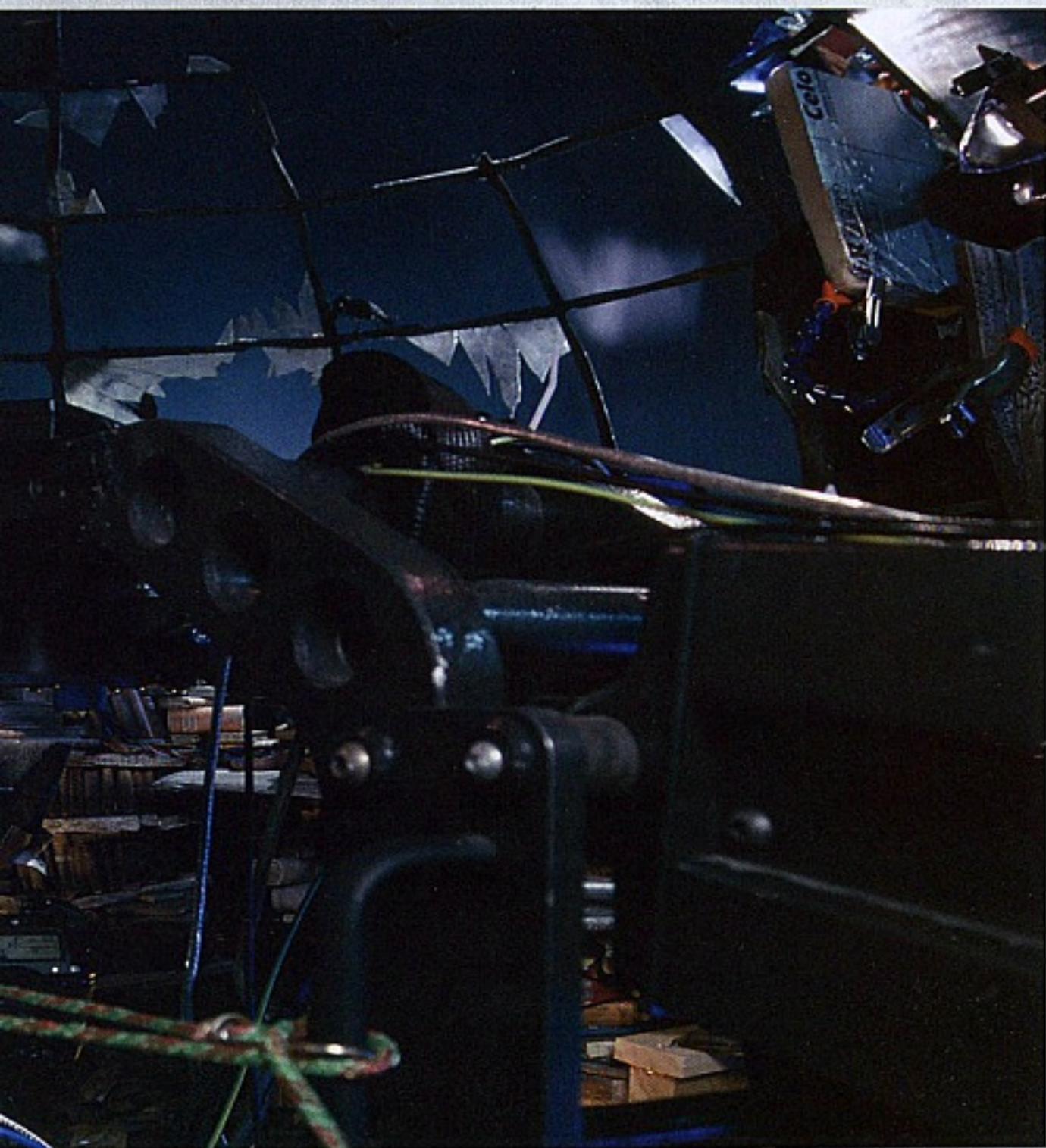
y different way is the question of animator
ct with their puppets on the stage. “An animator
it comfortably,” explains John Minchin, set con-
ke animator access into account from day one of
ause if we make something and then the anima-
s. But even with all that forward planning, you
that means that the puppet is going to be some-
e to cut a trap door, or remake the floor so a
top-motion animation. Fluctuations in tempera-

*OPPOSITE: Animator
Malcolm Lamont in Elder
Gutknecht’s Study set.*

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to expand, producing movement that can be
rly affects delicate items. "When you look at the
atching where it shouldn't," says Minchin. "It's
e it, you might see a two millimeter movement
t of animated films in the past didn't worry too
didn't have the budgets to worry about it."

sets were constructed using a solid steel frame-
some ways they have to be, because of the length
These sets are under lights for at least a year. So

Nightmare Before Christmas was its wonderful score
ich had been written and, in many cases, sung by
man, who remembers Burton first talking
hough it wasn't until 2004 that he says he
e scores for both *Corpse Bride* and *Charlie and*

asical numbers for *The Nightmare Before*
n Elfman writing the songs before a script had
versations he'd had with Burton. "Usually there's
says. "What we did in *Nightmare* was a little bit
en we were starting on *Nightmare* nobody really
g in what order, we were almost inventing how

Bride, the process was more much traditional,
reenplay. Even so, he says he approached the
stead of Tim telling me the story, the story was in

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the script and like in *Nightmare* there were some lyrics I wanted to pick up on," he notes. "John had done his own lyrics for songs, and for the first one I stayed close to the lyrics he had written; the lyrics are kind of by both of us."

For the opening number, "According to Plan," which introduces the characters of Victor and Victoria, their respective families and the story of their upcoming marriage, Burton wanted the song to have a kind of ticktock, ticktock rhythm to it. "That was a tough song because Tim wanted it to feel very repressed and rigid, and there's a certain point where if you do that too long it's not going to be much of a song," Elfman explains. "So I was trying to keep the repressed feeling of the style but still having it lift just

enough to be a song. My instinct was to have a chorus otherwise the opening piece wouldn't work. It really will be a good balance."

More than a decade after *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, the jazzy pub that fills Victor's wedding scene in *The Wedding Bride*, a song's

"R... because I'm interested in using it to play, and



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acts were telling me, We have to lift for the
se it's going to be so boring. I said, 'This is
ece and if the whole thing is too depressing,
murder on the audience.' But I found a

re to Elfman's liking was "Remains of the
y musical number in the Land of the Dead
ictor in on the tragic history of Corpse
sung by skeleton bandleader Bonejangles.
Remains of the Day' was a piece of cake
to old jazz anyhow," he grins. "That's what I
nd so any time I'm writing in that style it's

*ABOVE: Orchestra session
conducted by Nick Ingman.
LEFT: Tim Burton and
Danny Elfman scoring the
film at London's Abbey
Road Studios.*

real fun and easy for me. I did Cab Calloway and some of that kind of Fleischer-esque jazz stuff as well, that kind of thing. It's clear, if you see skeletons in a band they're not going to be Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, Louis Prima, and so on.

Less fun for Elfman, however, was *Bonejangles*—a character inspired by Sammy Davis Jr. “When I started playing around with the character, I found myself falling into Sammy. It started veering away from the character and so, vocally, he ended up something more like a strong rather than Sammy, except maybe for the big Sammy ending. I found myself being pulled into the style of the piece probably had some of that older feeling song than a Sammy Davis Jr. song.”

Not that Elfman even intended to imitate Jack. He ended up the same as in *Nightmare* where I was imitating Jack's voice. This was harder because Jack's voice is not my voice. Bonejangles's voice is not my voice. I wrote a rough sounding voice than mine. We actually did two or three versions of the song with other singers and I was like, “Can you do it? But it was hard, because whereas Jack's voice was really rough. Every time I tried to imitate his voice it was really rough.”

In all, Elfman composed five songs for the film. It was relatively easy compared to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. *Before Christmas* the tone and the trajectory of the story was easy to follow. Sometimes following the character of Charlie was that way. Whereas with *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Beetlejuice* it's very easy to follow the tone and the trajectory of the story starting and going.”

“In general, when we're in the L.A. area, we're in the L.A. area.”

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y tunes for years, and I think Tim likes the old of relates to the crazy skeleton. To me it was so going to be playing somewhere between Cab and all these guys."

as the fact he had to provide the singing voice for my Davis Jr. "I couldn't do Sammy," he states.

mo and I was writing the song I just didn't find g off early because he was such a rough-looking ewhere between Cab Calloway and Louis Arm- the last note where I did my best to pull out one lled into a rougher, growlier voice than Sammy's ething to do with it as it came together. It was an ong but it's all tied together in various ways."

o sing the song in the first place. "It kind of did the demos and those songs ended up being voice is real easy for me; Jack's voice is my voice. it to be sung by a rougher, tougher-

23 or 24 auditions and I recorded three different in the end Tim came and said, Do you think you I could sing Jack Skellington's voice all day, Bone- sang it, I was hoarse for the rest of the day."

gs plus the score for *Corpse Bride*. "The score ie," he reveals, "because as with *The Nightmare* y of the characters was very clear and was racters and their tone can be very, very tricky; are, *Corpse Bride*, *Edward Scissorhands*, and and the trajectory of where the characters are

and of the Living there should always be a sense

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of it being stodgier, and so I would use a harpiscord. "Or when we're in the Land of the Dead things are a little more dramatic. But when you really lay out a score of a film it's not about the characters. Ultimately when you start scoring, you're following a tender moment between Victor and Corpse Bride, and you're capturing their emotions and it's irrelevant where they are. It's not about the setting, in, I'm playing the characters."

Elfman's musical partnership with Burton dates back to 1986 when he composed his first film score for Burton's debut feature *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure*. Since then, he's been responsible for scoring every Burton film, bar *Ed Wood*, and says their collaboration works so well because they both operate in much the same way.

"Tim works completely and totally viscerally. Some directors work totally in the logical realm of working things out intellectually; they'll tell you what the backstory is, what characters are thinking. I find that to be not at all helpful, because, in the end, I also work in the realm of emotion. All of our productions are all about emotion, it's all visceral. He'll tell me how he feels about a song and what it should be, and I'll just gut and dive in and find a way for it to translate on screen."

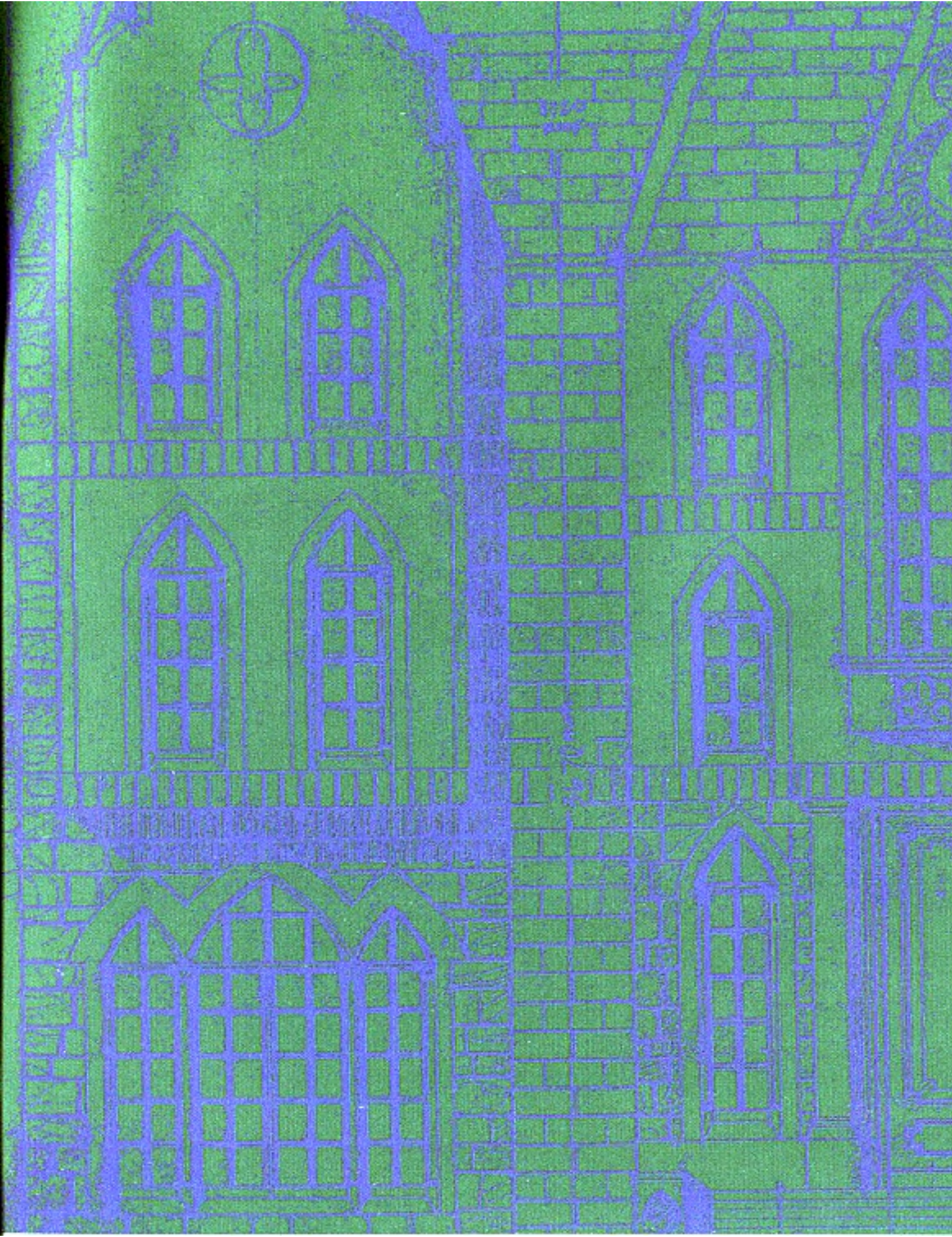
"Sometimes it's hard to get those two worlds to mesh. "Interpreting musically what's going on in Tim's mind is a weird, crazy world inside. But in the process of explaining it, I'm going to find that my instincts and his instincts are actually very similar."

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hord and keep it oppressive," he continues. "The songs are going to be more jazzy and up tempo. It's going to be much more complicated than that. It's about capturing the emotions of the characters. So if it's about Victor and Victoria, I'm going to play it more like a love story. Once the emotions of the characters come



completely viscerally. With Tim, his reaction is to tell me how he feels about the characters, what he's doing, and then I've just to go find my own way over to his world. It's about finding places to intersect," Elfman concludes. "The mind is not a simple thing because it's a big, complex thing. It's about experimenting and finding my own instincts and letting them cross over and merge into a single path."









PART THREE

Going Upstairs

THE ILLUSTRATED STORY



B R I D E



T H E I L L U S T R



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A T E D S T O R Y



Victor, a handsome nineteen-year-old with a slightly dreamy demeanor, adds tiny finishing touches to the sketch. His Victorian-style room is filled with drawings and paintings of all sizes, mostly of butterflies. There is one prominent painting of Victor with a friendly looking dog wearing a bright red collar. The drawing done, Victor lifts a glass bell jar. A butterfly escapes, flits around the room and out of the open window. We follow the butterfly on its flight around the town.

E: Storyboards by Sharon Smith and David Stoten.

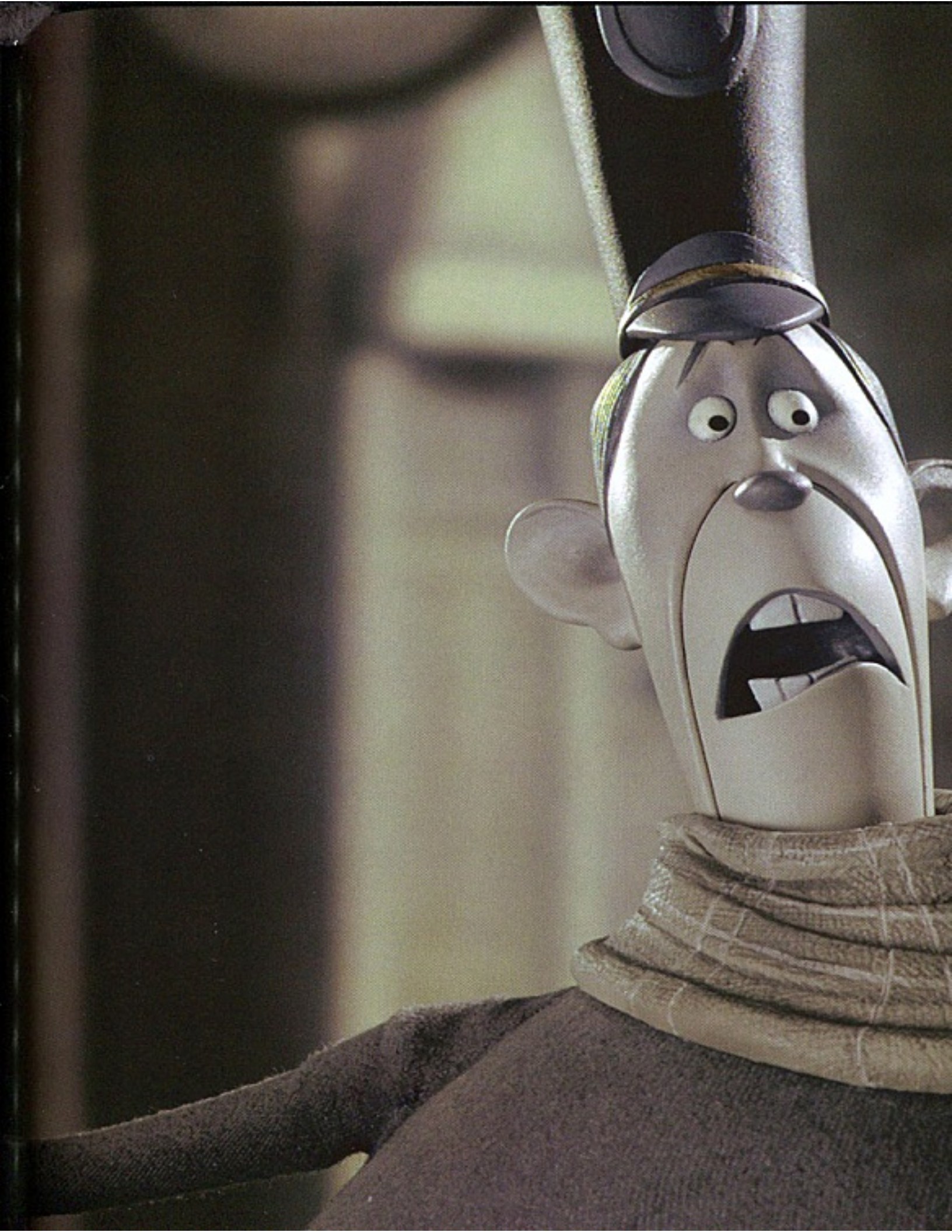


One man, Barkis Bittern. He is well dressed and has a stern scowl on his face as he absently swats the butterfly. He is the Town Crier of the Everglot Mansion—easily the most important man in the town. A church bell chimes the hour. The Town Crier strides into the square with his handbell.

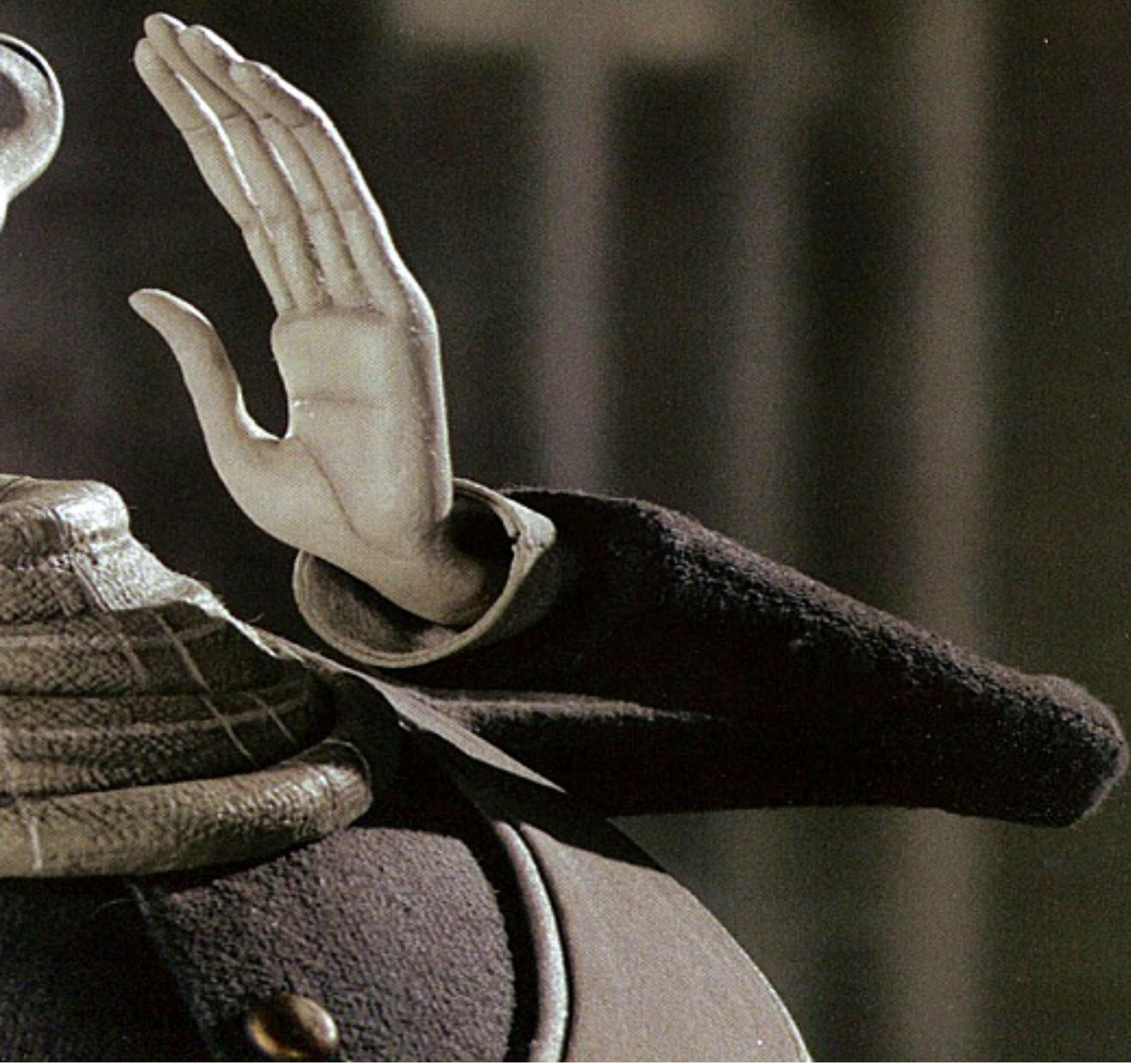


, has newly arrived in town.
 confident but there is a sinis-
 s he saunters through town.
 away and his gaze rests on
 the best house in town.
 first of four strokes. The
 are and rings his big



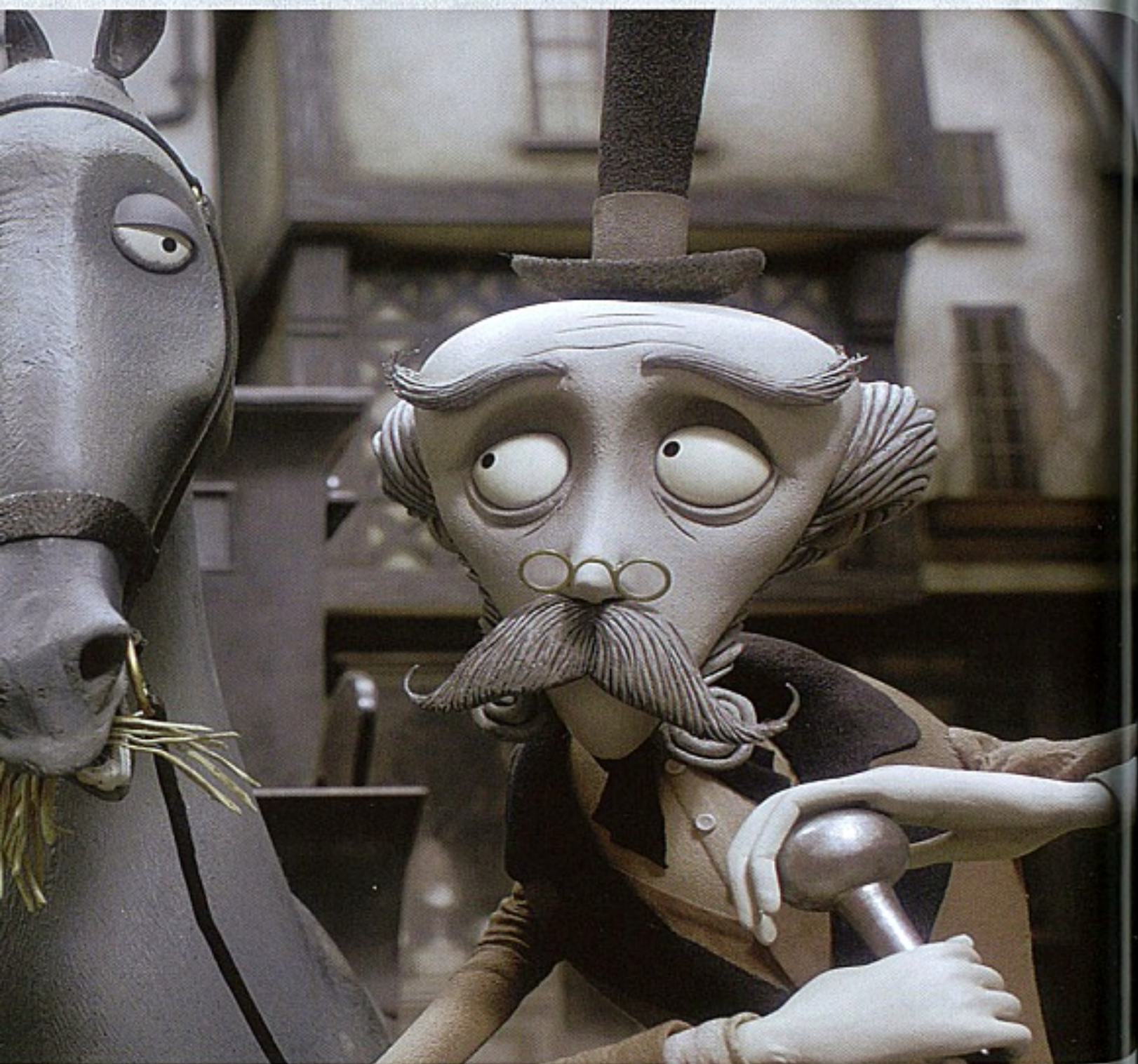


“Hear ye, hear ye,
ten minutes to go
till the Van Dorts
wedding rehearsal!”





B R I D E



———— PART ONE ————

NELL

It's a beautiful day!

WILLIAM

It's a rather nice day.

NELL

A day for a glorious wedding!

WILLIAM

A *rehearsal* my dear, to be perfectly clear.

NELL

A rehearsal for a glorious wedding!

WILLIAM

Assuming nothing happens that we don't really know.

NELL

That nothing unexpected interferes with the show.

NELL & WILLIAM

And that is why everything,

Every last little thing,

Every single tiny microscopic little thing must GO. . .

NELL

According to plan—

WILLIAM

Our son will be married

NELL

According to plan—

WILLIAM

Our family carried

NELL & WILLIAM

Elevated to the heights of society

NELL

To the costume balls—

WILLIAM

in the hallowed halls . . .



According to Plan

NELL

Rubbing elbows with the finest.

WILLIAM

Having crumpets with Her Highness.

NELL & WILLIAM

We'll be there, we'll be seen,
Having tea with the Queen! We'll forget everything,



WILLIAM

That we've ever, ever been!

NELL

Where is Victor? We might be late!

PART TWO

INT. EVERGLOT DRAWING ROOM - DAY

MAUDELINE

It's a terrible day!

FINIS

Now, don't be that way. . .

MAUDELINE

It's a terrible day for a wedding.

It's a sad, sad state of affair

MA

That has led to this omin

How could our family hav

MAUDE

To marry off our daughter

MA

They're so common,

So coarse,

MA

Oh it couldn't be worse. .

Couldn't be worse?—

I'm afraid I disagree.

They could be land rich, l

Without a penny to their

just like you and me. . .

MA

Oh dear.

MAUDE

And that's why everything

Every single, tiny, microsc



B R I D E

FINIS

rs we're in,

UDELINE

ous wedding.

FINIS

ve come to this,

LINE & FINIS

r to the nouveau riche. . .

UDELINE

FINIS

UDELINE

(she sighs)

FINIS

bankrupt aristocracy.

name,

UDELINE

LINE & FINIS

; every last little thing,

opic little thing must GO. . .

MAUDELINE

According to plan—

FINIS

our daughter will wed.

MAUDELINE

According to plan,

FINIS

our family led. . .

MAUDELINE & FINIS

From the depths of deepest poverty

MAUDELINE

To the noble realm

FINIS

of our ancestry.

MAUDELINE & FINIS

And who would have guessed, in a million years?

That our daughter with a face,

FINIS

of an otter in disgrace,

MAUDELINE & FINIS

Would provide our ticket, to our rightful place?

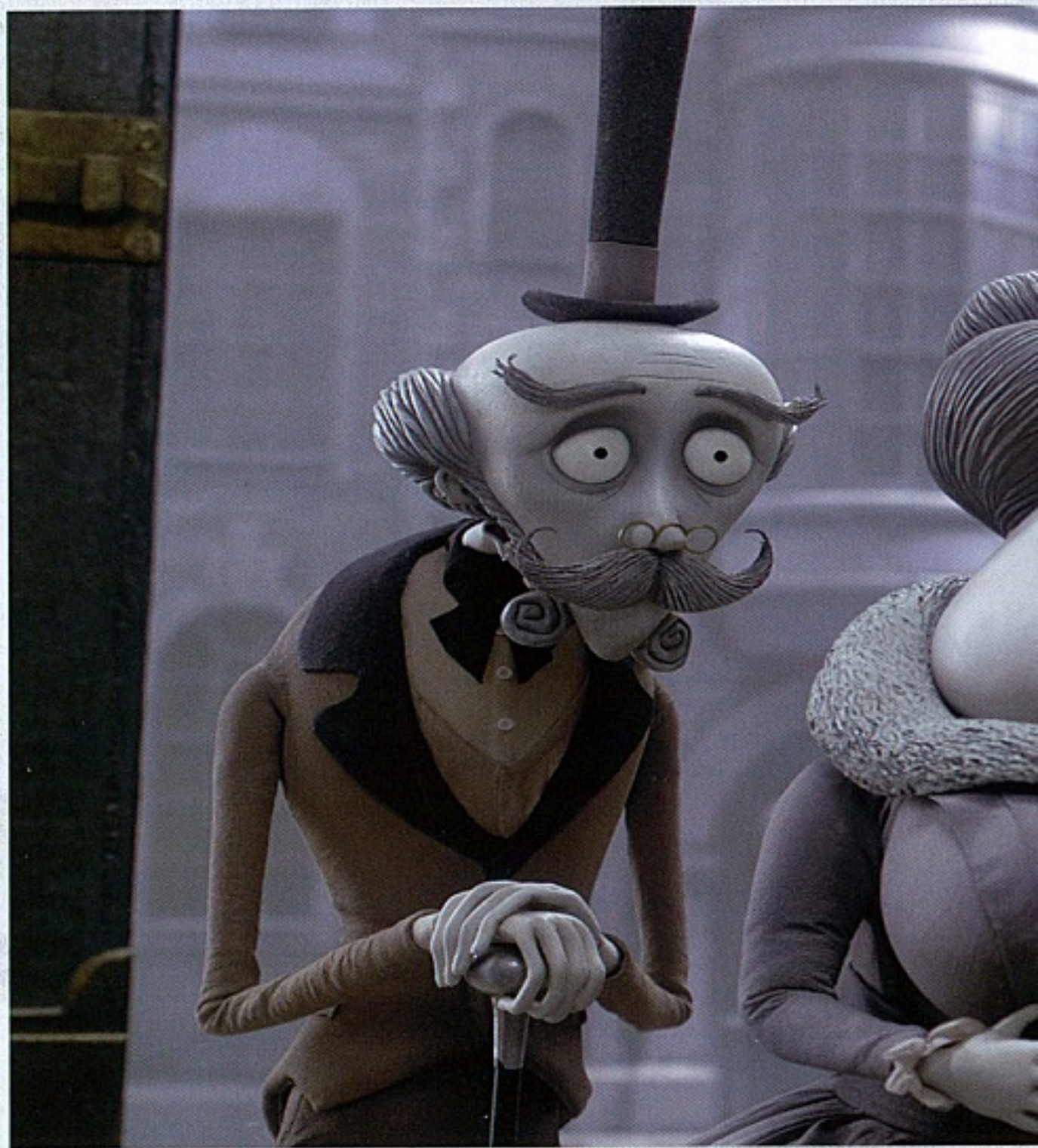
CUT TO:

T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y





B R I D E



T H E I L L U S T R

INT. VICTORIA'S BEDROOM – DAY

VICTORIA EVERGLOT. *Despite what her mother thinks, she's a pretty, sweet young girl. At the moment, she is being laced into tight corsets by her elderly maid, Hildegarde.*

The SONG continues, though they talk for a moment.

VICTORIA

Oh, Hildegarde, what if Victor and I don't like each other?

There is a shocked, severe LAUGH from the doorway. Victoria and Hildegarde whirl to see the imposing figure of Maudeline. Finis is at her side.

MAUDELINE

As if that has anything to do with marriage? Do you suppose your father and I "like" each other?

VICTORIA

Surely you must, a little?

FINIS & MAUDELINE (in unison)

Of course not!

Maudeline turns on her heel. Without looking back—

MAUDELINE

Get those corsets laced properly! I can hear you speak without gasping!

———— PART THREE ————

INT. EVERGLOT ENTRY HALL – DAY

Finis and Maudeline step down the grand stairway.



MAUDELINE

Marriage is a partnership, a little bit of fun, think a lifetime watching us (be) together. Would have taught her that, might have taught her that!

FINIS

Everything will be perfect. . .

MAUDELINE

Everything will be perfect. . .

FINIS

Everything MUST be perfect!

A T E D S T O R Y



LINE
le tit for tat. You'd
ginning to sing)

MAUDELINE, WILLIAM & NELL (*overlapping Finis*)
Perfect. . . Perfect. . . .

ALL IN UNISON (*to be intercut*)
That's why everything,
every last little thing,
Every single tiny microscopic little thing must go
(*all in harmony*)
According to plan!

THE SONG ENDS.

Victor stands in the sudden silence, unsure of what to do. Looking around nervously, his glance falls on a piano.

Victor is irresistibly drawn to it. He sits and caresses the keys. On the piano he notices a small vase holding a single stem of winter jasmine. He begins to play, at first haltingly, then losing himself in the music.

His song is sad but dreamy.



Cut to: Victoria is nervously adjusting her already perfect hair when the music suddenly floats up to her.

Victoria stops, transfixed, then continues down the steps, following the sound of the piano.

She quietly walks up behind Victor.

Victor is seated at the piano, his back toward the stairs. He plays, lost in his music.

Startled, Victor jumps in his seat, banging his knees on the piano, causing the lid to drop with a loud, reverberating thud.

OPPOSITE: Storyboards by Sharon Smith.



B R I D E

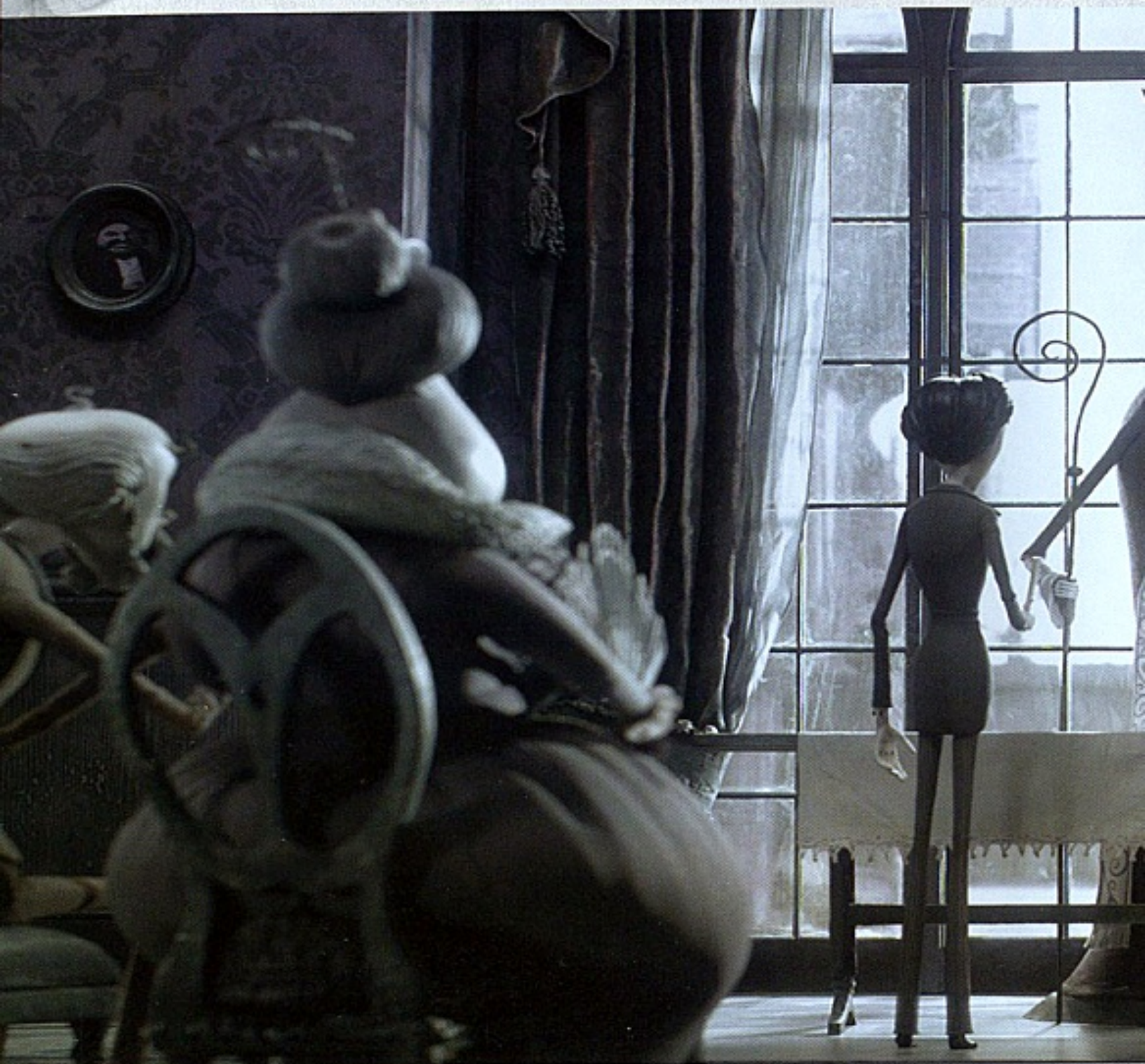


T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y





B R I D E



T H E I L L U S T R



The group has gathered in the drawing room to rehearse the wedding ceremony. Seated are Finis and Maudeline, William and Nell.

The front of the room has been set up as a makeshift altar. An elaborately carved table holds a pair of candles and a chalice.

Pressure is high and the rehearsal hasn't been going so well.

Grimly imposing Pastor Galswells presides, holding a book and an ornamental holy scepter. Victor trembles in nervous agony as Pastor Galswells glares at him.



A T E D S T O R Y



The doorbell chimes.

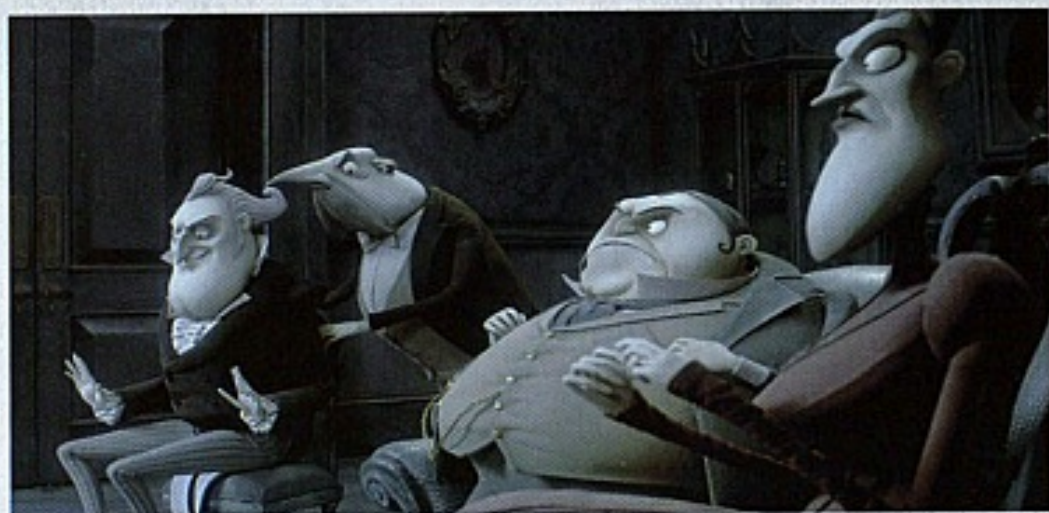
Finis: "Get the door Emil."

Pastor Galswells: "Let's just pick it up at the candle bit."

Emil returns with a calling card in hand.

Emil: "A Lord Barkis, sir."

Finis and Maudeline are surprised by this unexpected arrival, but the stranger's haughty manner and dress convince them that he must indeed be of noble lineage.



As Barkis takes his seat, he gestures halfheartedly at the bemused party.

Barkis: "Do carry on."

Victor holds the candle in his left hand. He takes Victoria's elbow and walks forward. Victoria takes three steps forward. Victor accidentally takes four.

Pastor Galswells hits him with the holy scepter.

Pastor Galswells: "Pay attention! Have you even remembered to bring the ring?"

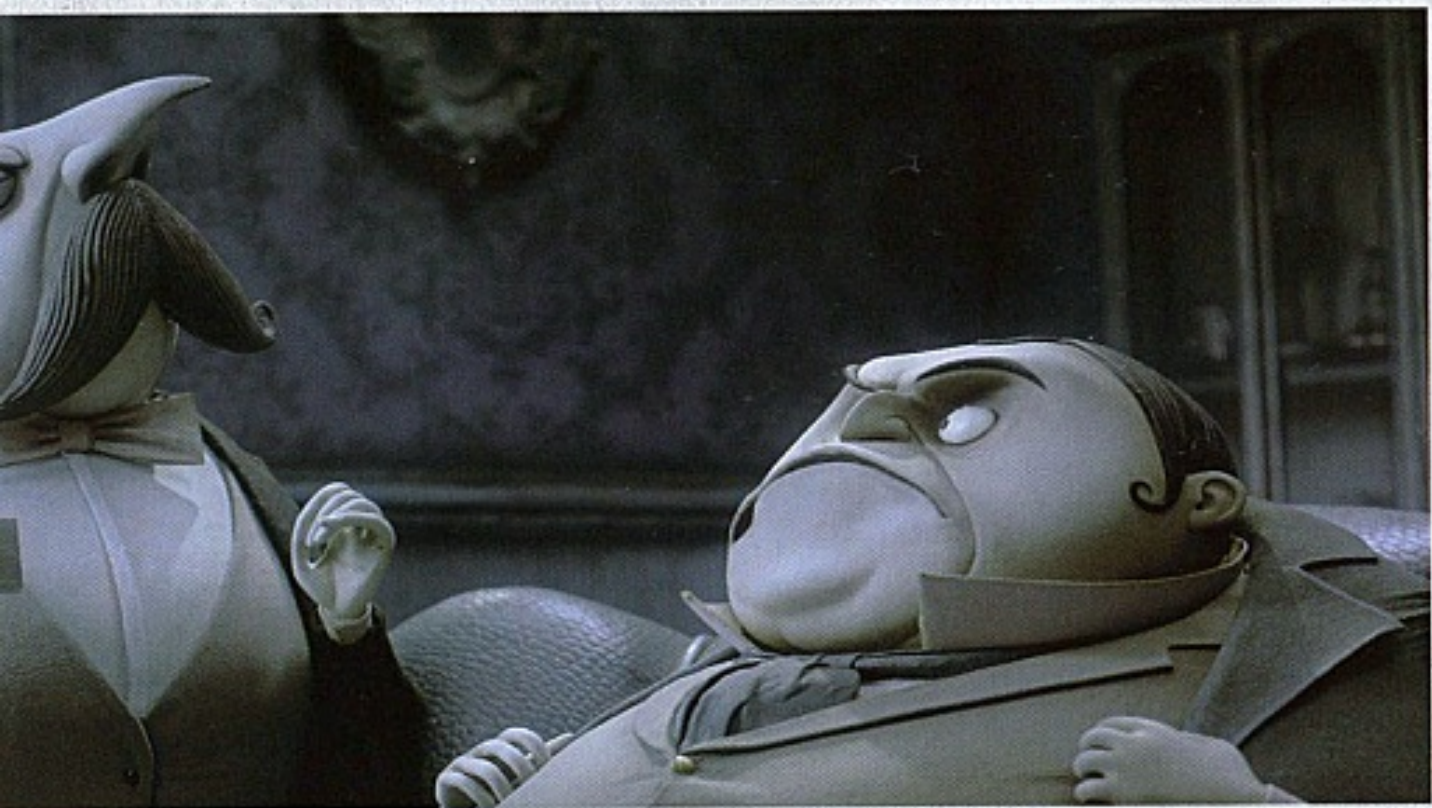
Victor: The ring... yes! Of course!

He pulls the ring out of this pocket, and fumbling, drops it. Everyone gasps at this sacrilege.

OPPOSITE: Storyboards by Dean Roberts.



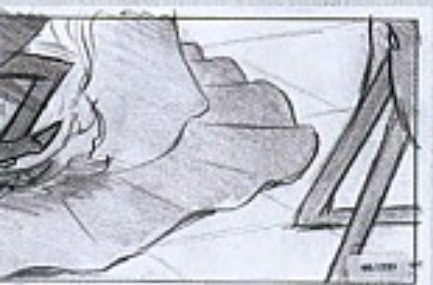
B R I D E



T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y



A midst all the ineffectual chaos, Barkis silently extends his hand, gripping the goblet of wine. He tips it onto Maudeline's dress, and with a puff of smoke, the fire is out.

Pastor Galswells: "Enough! This wedding cannot take place until he has properly prepared!"

Pastor Galswells points wrathfully toward the door.

"Young man, learn your vows!"

Humiliated, Victor stumbles out. Barkis smugly stands picking lint off his jacket.

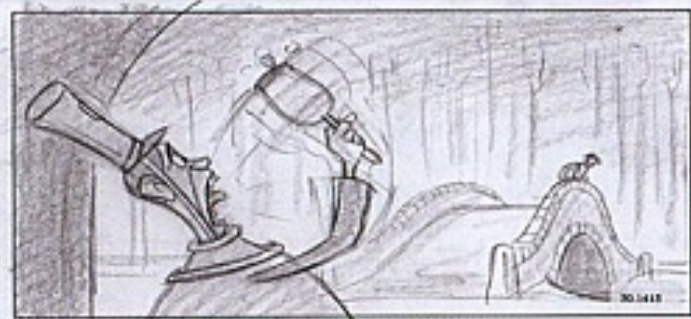
Barkis: "Well, he's quite the catch isn't he?"



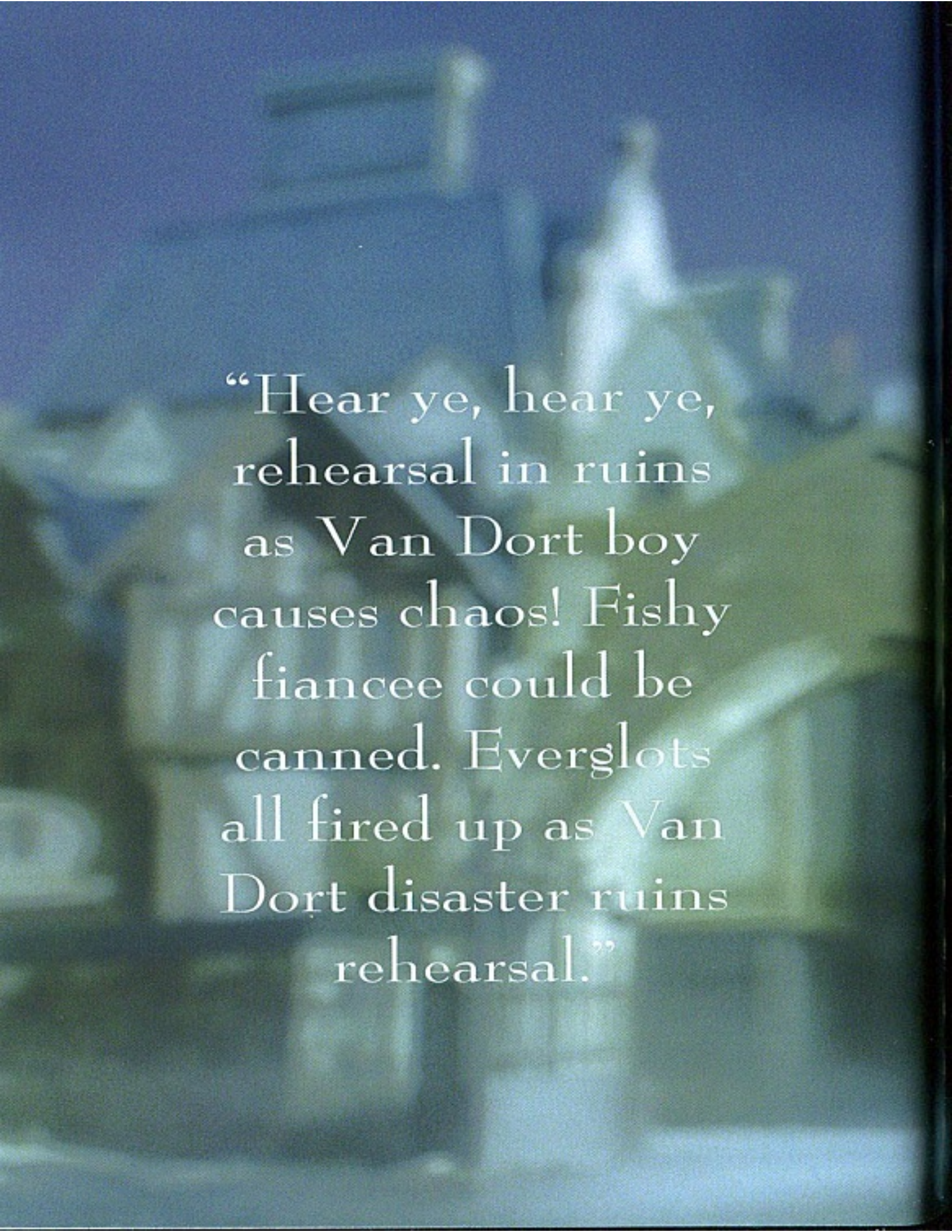
Distraught, Victor stops halfway across the old stone bridge, he takes out the winter jasmine.
Victor: "Oh Victoria, she must think I'm such a fool. This day couldn't get any worse."

Hearing a bell, he turns to see the Town Crier parading in the town.

Winning at the now public humiliation, Victor walks on toward the woods, chastising himself.



ABOVE: Storyboards by Chris Butler and Tim Watts.



“Hear ye, hear ye,
rehearsal in ruins
as Van Dort boy
causes chaos! Fishy
fiancee could be
canned. Everglots
all fired up as Van
Dort disaster ruins
rehearsal.”









Spindly birches give way to dark foreboding trees. Pushing through, Victor repeats the vows desperately to himself, but his distress causes him to make mistake after mistake.

Victor: "With this hand I will take your wine, Oh no. With this hand I will cup your. . . Oh goodness no!"

He tries it again.

First one crow, then more flap from tree to tree, following him as he wanders through the darkening forest. There is a haunted feel to the forest as if someone else is watching him.

Dejected, Victor sits on a stump.

He pulls the ring out of his pocket. With it comes the jasmine—and the memory of Victoria.

Just the idea of her seems to bring a new resolve to Victor.

The cawing of the crows becomes more insistent. Victor looks up, and, realizing that he now has an audience, decides to really go for it. He stands with a theatrical flourish.

Victor: "With this hand I will lift your sorrows, Your cup will never empty, for I will be your wine. . ."

He continues his vows, this time without a single stumble. "With this candle, I will light your way in darkness..."

Victor has his confidence back. The squawking grows louder from the branches overhead. With a dramatic flourish he kneels.

Victor: "With this ring, I ask you to be mine."

He slips the ring on a small twisted root that extends from the ground.

Suddenly the crows fall silent. A faint wind rustles through the trees.

Victor looks up into the branches, where the crows silently stare down at him. The root twitches, unnoticed. Still watching the crows, Victor reaches for his ring when...

The root suddenly encircles his wrist.



T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y





Victor desperately pulls, ripping a mass of roots and dirt from the ground. Sprawling backward, he sees a skeletal arm clamped around his wrist.

Victor screams and flings it away as the ground splits open in front of him. A root-covered figure, wearing a tattered wedding gown, bursts from the frozen earth to reveal the Corpse Bride. The ring sparkles in the moonlight.

B R I D E



T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y

“I do!”



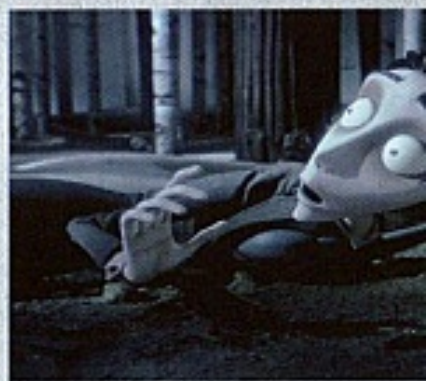


Victor scrambles backward, turns and runs frantically, stumbling through thickets and branches.

The Corpse Bride moves toward him.

Victor runs for his life, dodging between the crooked tombstones. He crashes blindly through the branches of the bare, brittle trees that seem to block his escape. He stumbles across a small creek as the Corpse Bride pursues him.

OPPOSITE: Storyboards by Tim Watts.





T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y



As Victor dashes blindly through the trees, the crows fly in his path. He reaches the edge of the woods and sprints toward the footbridge.

Suddenly, the crows burst from the trees, flying straight at him. He turns to run, and freezes in horror. . .

The strangely alluring figure of the Corpse Bride approaches him from the other side of the bridge.

The Corpse Bride moves toward Victor as the crows gather, swirling around them. Overcome by fear, Victor stands motionless. She slowly lifts her veil. On her skeletal hand the wedding ring glistens in the moonlight.

Huge eyes dominate her pale face.

She leans toward him, her bony hand touches his chest as the crows encircle them, forming a solid field of black. . .

Corpse Bride: "You may kiss the bride. . ."



"A new arrival!"



"By Jove man, look
like we've got our-
selves a breather."





“Don’t crowd
Give him some



him.
air."



B R I D E

Victor bolts upright and backs up into the bar. He is reeling. He looks around the room trying to get his bearings.



“A toast then. To the newlyweds.”



Paul the Head Waiter: “Bonjour! Coming through, coming through! My name is Paul, I am the head waiter. I will be creating your wedding feast.”
At the mere mention of food, a lime-green maggot pops out of the Corpse Bride’s eye socket.
Maggot: “Wedding feast. . . I’m salivating.”

ABOVE: Storyboards by Chris Butler and Dean Roberts.

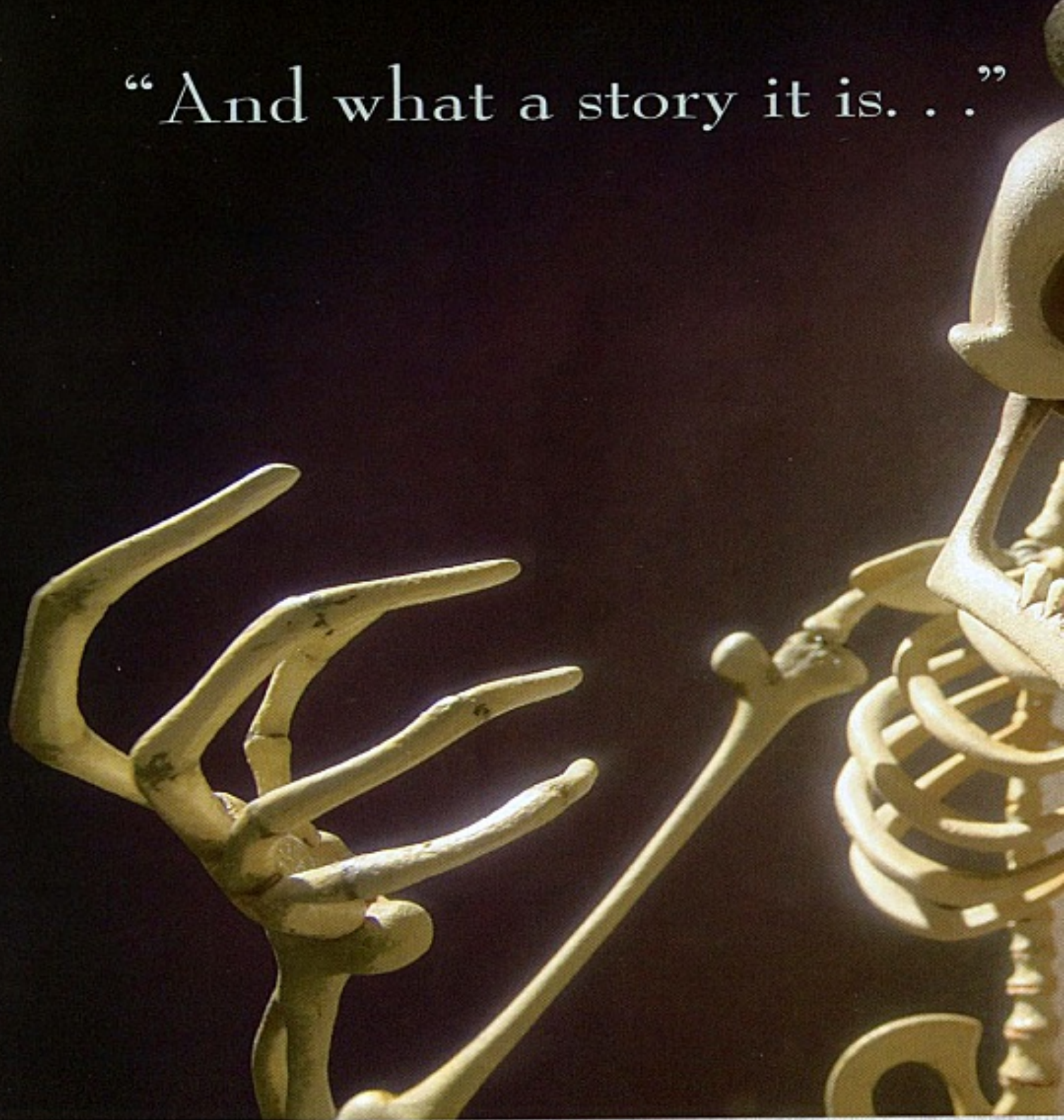
T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y



“And what a story it is. . .”





BONEJANGLES

Give me a listen— you corpses of cheer
At least those of you who still got an ear,
I'll tell you a story, make a skeleton cry
Of our own jubalishishly lovely corpse bride.

(chorus)

Die, die, we all pass away
But don't wear a frown cause it's really O.K.
You might try and hide and you might try and pray
But we all end up the remains of the day.

Yeah, Yeah, Yeah,
Yeah, Yeah, Yeah

Well our girl was a beauty known for miles around
When a mysterious stranger came into town.
He was plenty good lookin' — but down on his cash.

And our poor little baby, she fell hard & fast.
When her daddy said no, she just couldn't cope.
So our lovers came up with a plan to elope.

(chorus)

Die, die, we all pass away
But don't wear a frown cause it's really O.K.
You might try and hide and you might try and pray
But we all end up the remains of the day.

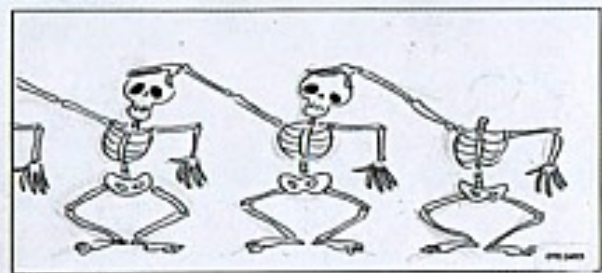
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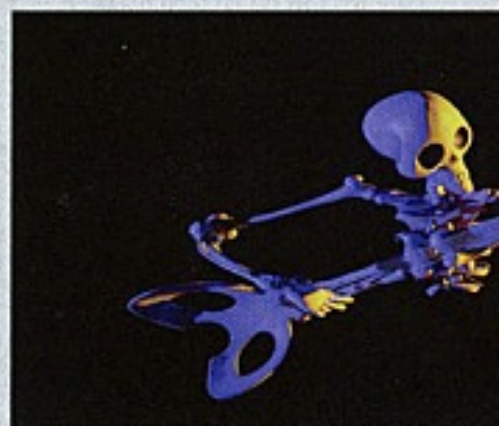


ABOVE: Storyboards by Chris Bu

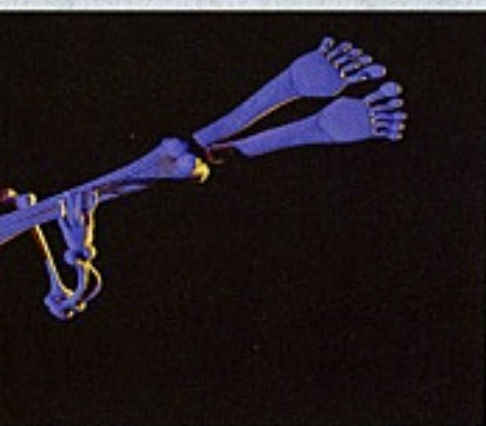
A T E D S T O R Y

Remains of the Day





B R I D E



Yeah, Yeah, Yeah,
Yeah, Yeah, Yeah

So they conjured (up) a plan to meet late at night
They told not a soul, kept the whole thing tight.
(Now) her mother's wedding dress—fit like a glove
You don't need much—when you're really in love

Except for a few things, or so I'm told.
Like the family jewels and a satchel of gold.
(then) next to the graveyard—by the old oak tree
on a dark foggy night—at a quarter to three
she was ready to go—but where was he?

(and then?). . . She waited
(and then?). . . There, in the shadows (was it her man?)
(and then?). . . her (little) heart beat so loud.
(and then?). . . and then, baby. . . everything went black!

(Now) when she opened her eyes, she was dead as dust.
Her jewels were missing and her heart was bust.

So she made a vow, lying under that tree,
That she'd wait for her true love to come set her free.

Always waiting for someone to come take her hand
But out of the blue comes this groovy young man
Who vows forever, to be by her side.
And that's the story of our Corpse Bride!

(chorus)

Die, die, we all pass away
But don't wear a frown cause it's really O.K.
You might try and hide and you might try and pray
But we all end up the remains of the day.

ABOVE: Storyboards by Chris Butler.

T H E I L L U S T R




The Pub is swirling with activity as the Dead dance and laugh. Victor takes advantage of the pandemonium to make a hasty exit.

The Corpse Bride, distracted by the celebration in her honor, looks up just in time to see her new husband run out into the night.

A T E D S T O R Y





A close-up of a character's face, likely from the movie "The Incredibles", showing a large eye and a portion of the forehead.

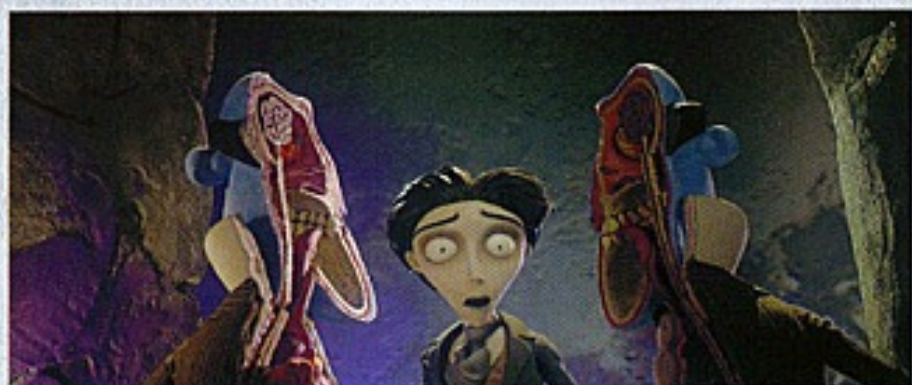
“Hear ye, hear ye! Victor Van Dort seen this night on the bridge in the arms of a mystery woman. The dark-haired temptress and master Van Dort slipped away into the night!”



T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y



The town square in the Land of the Dead is poles away from its “living” counterpart. Paradoxically, this place is filled with happy denizens going about their lively business. Amongst the hustle and bustle, the Corpse Bride searches for her missing husband.



“Oh, I almost forgot. I have something for you. It’s a wedding present.”



B R I D E

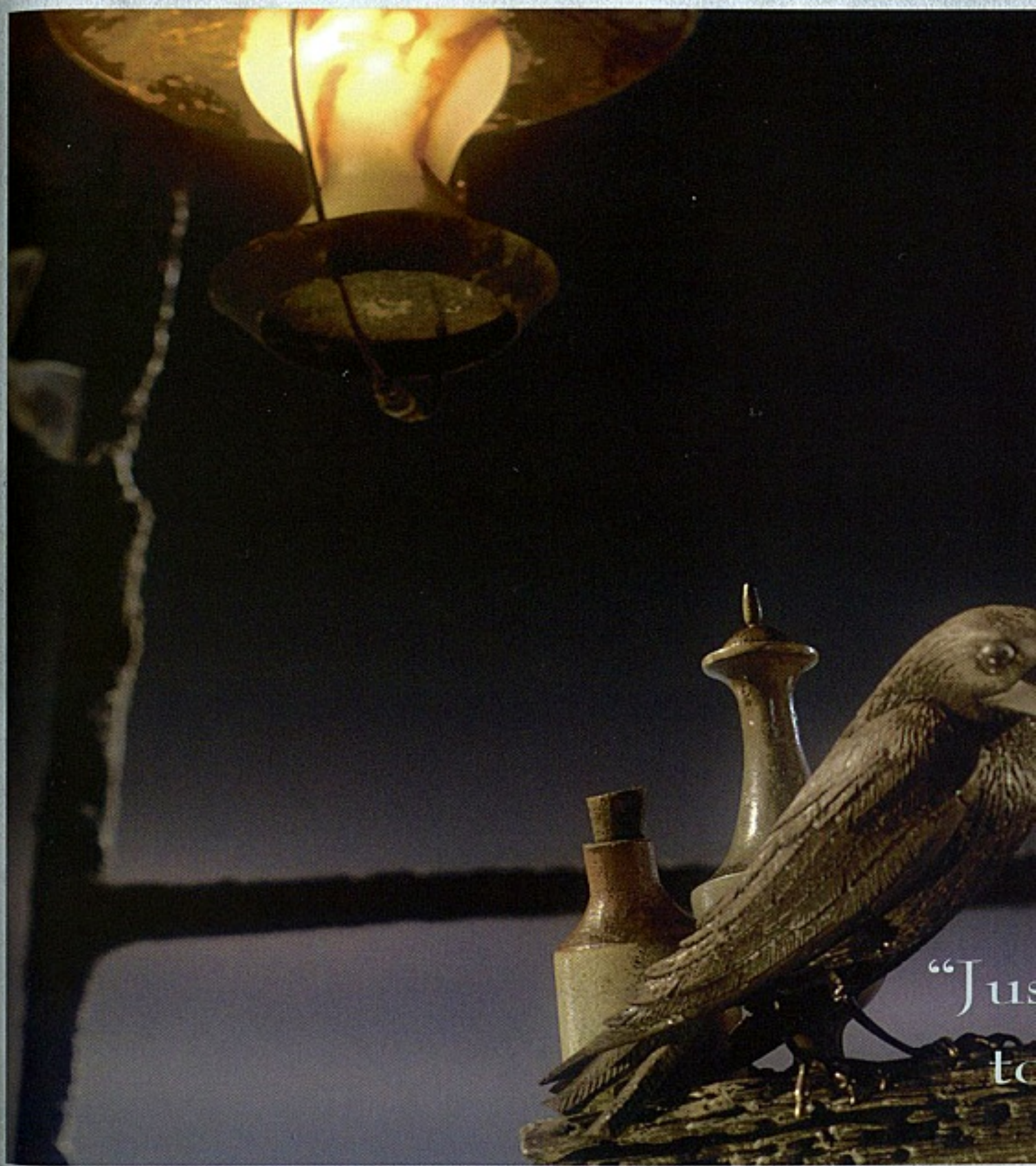


Corpse Bride and Victor approach Elder Gutknecht's eyrie. Scraps barks as they start to climb the stairs. Corpse Bride: "Elder Gutknecht, are you there?"

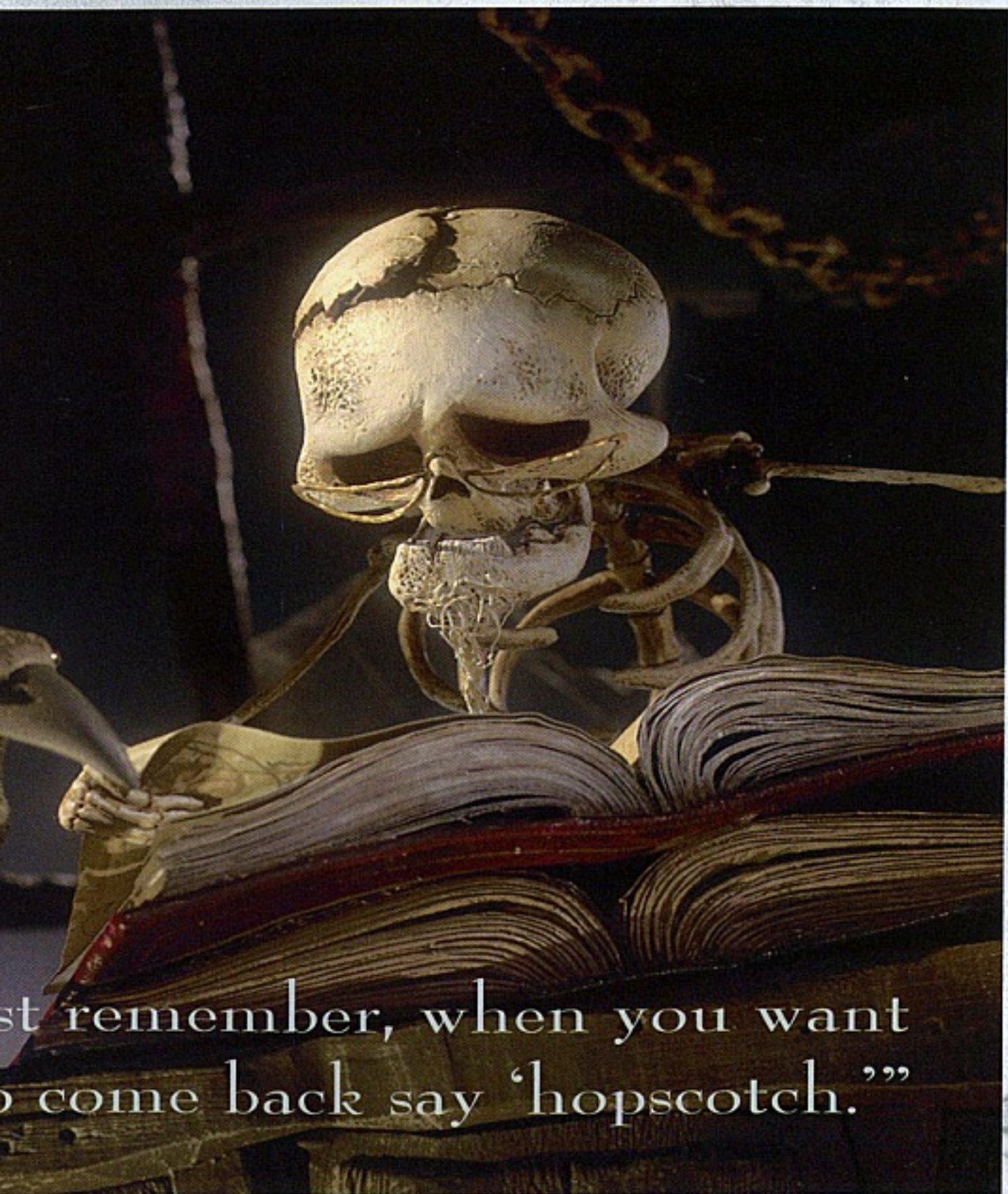
As he peeks his head above his podium we see that, though bent and twisted as a tree root, Elder G. is really just an elderly affable chap in wire-rimmed glasses. If you ignore the fact that he's a walking, talking skeleton, he's not so scary after all.

Corpse Bride: "We need to go up, upstairs? To visit the Land of the Living."

Elder Gutknecht: "Land of the Living? . . . Oh my dear."



“Just
to



st remember, when you want
o come back say 'hopscotch.'”



As the sparkling dust clears, he finds himself standing back in the land of the living. The Corpse Bride is at his side. She is overwhelmed by the beauty of the moonlight on the freshly fallen snow. Now that she is in love the whole world seems different.

Laughing, she dances around the clearing, disappearing behind tree trunks and reappearing again, gasping and giggling with delight.

At first, Victor is entranced by the vision of her dancing. But he is wracked with guilt. He turns away from her, reminding himself of his plan to return to his true love, Victoria.

Victor: "Hold on... Hold on... I think... I should prepare mother and father for the big news. I'll go ahead and you wait here."





Victoria sits in her armchair, frantically stitching away at her quilt, which has gotten increasingly chaotic and bizarre.

Through the window behind Victoria, we see Victor tumble over the railing. He urgently knocks on the glass.

She turns to see him on her balcony—disheveled, muddy, his jacket torn, his hair wild. She is overjoyed to see him. She rushes over and opens the French doors. Victor enters.

She truly is beautiful, with a kindness that glows inside her. Victor, whose recent ordeals have seemingly chased away his shyness, takes her hand and looks into her eyes.

They gently lean toward each other as though to kiss, but just as their lips are about to meet, Victor's gaze drifts past Victoria's shoulder. . .

T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y

“Hopscotch!”







T H E I L L U S T R

MAGGOT

What does that wispy little brat
Have that you don't have double?

SPIDER

She can't hold a candle
To the beauty of your smile.

CORPSE BRIDE

How about a pulse?

MAGGOT

Overrated by a mile.

SPIDER

Overvalued.

MAGGOT

Overblown.

MAGGOT & SPIDER

If he only knew the you that we know.

MAGGOT

And that silly little creature
Isn't wearing his ring.

SPIDER

And she doesn't play piano
Or dance or sing.

MAGGOT & SPIDER

No, she doesn't compare,

SPIDER

But she still breathes air.

MAGGOT & SPIDER

Who cares?

Unimportant,

Overrated,

Overblown.

MAGGOT

MAGGOT &

SPIDER



A T E D S T O R Y

Tears to Shed

OT

MAGGOT & SPIDER

SPIDER

If only he could see how special you can be.
If he only knew the you that we . . . know.

R

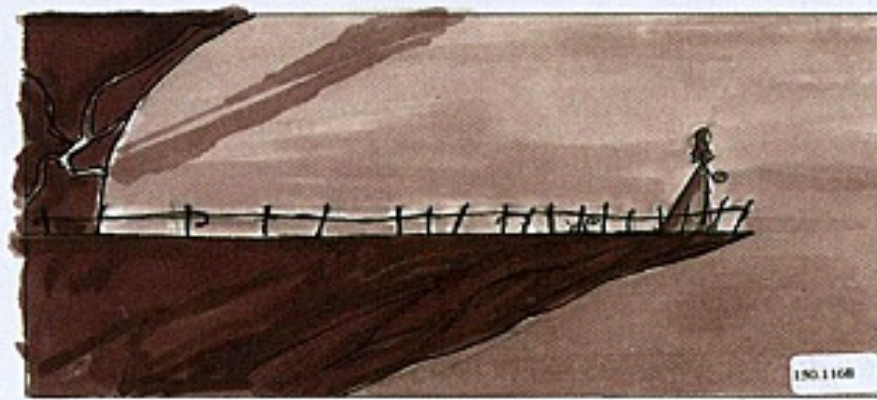
CORPSE BRIDE

If I touch a burning candle, I can feel no pain.
If you cut me with a knife, it's still the same.
And I know her heart is beating.
And I know that I am dead,





B R I D E



ABOVE: Storyboards by Patrick Collins.

T H E I L L U S T R

Yet the pain here that I feel, try and tell me it's not real.
And it seems that I still have a tear to shed.

SPIDER

The sole redeeming feature
Of that silly creature is that she's alive.
Overrated.

MAGGOT

Overblown.

SPIDER

Everybody knows that's just a temporary state,
Which is cured very quickly when we meet our fate.

MAGGOT

Who cares,

SPIDER

Unimportant,

MAGGOT

Overrated,

SPIDER

Overblown.

MAGGOT & SPIDER

If only he could see how special you can be.
If he only knew the you that we . . . know.

CORPSE BRIDE

If I touch a burning candle, I can feel no pain.
In the ice or in the sun, it's all the same.
Yet I feel my heart is aching.
Though it doesn't beat, it's breaking.
And the pain here that I feel try and tell me it's not real.
And I know that I am dead.
And it seems that I still have some tears to shed.



A T E D S T O R Y





“But I do n



Finis: “Without your marriage to Lord Barkis, we shall be forced penniless into the street. We are destitute!”

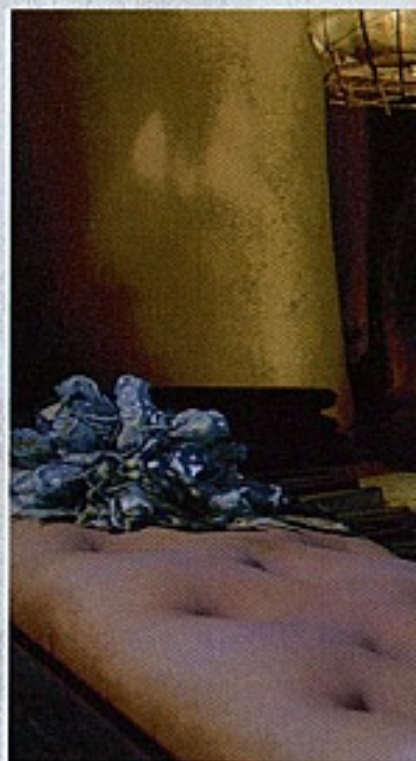
Victoria: “But. . . Victor.”

Finis: “You shall marry Lord Barkis tomorrow.”

True to character, Barkis has been hiding outside the door and has overheard the whole conversation. He steps out of a darkened doorway as Finis and Maudeline pass by, and laughs eerily.

He notices the portrait of Victoria beside him. Her sad countenance looking back at him as if in judgment.

Barkis: “Oh my dear. . . don’t look at me that way! You have only to suffer this union until death do us part. . . . And that will come sooner than you think.”



B R I D E



ot love him! You cannot make me do this!”



The Corpse Bride is seated at the old piano, plinking sadly. Victor walks up to her.

Victor: “I’m sorry. I’m sorry I lied to you about wanting to see my parents. It’s just this whole day hasn’t gone quite, well, according to plan.”

She avoids his gaze and continues playing her sad tune.

ABOVE: Storyboards by Chris Butler.

T H E I L L U S T R

“New arrival! New arrival!”

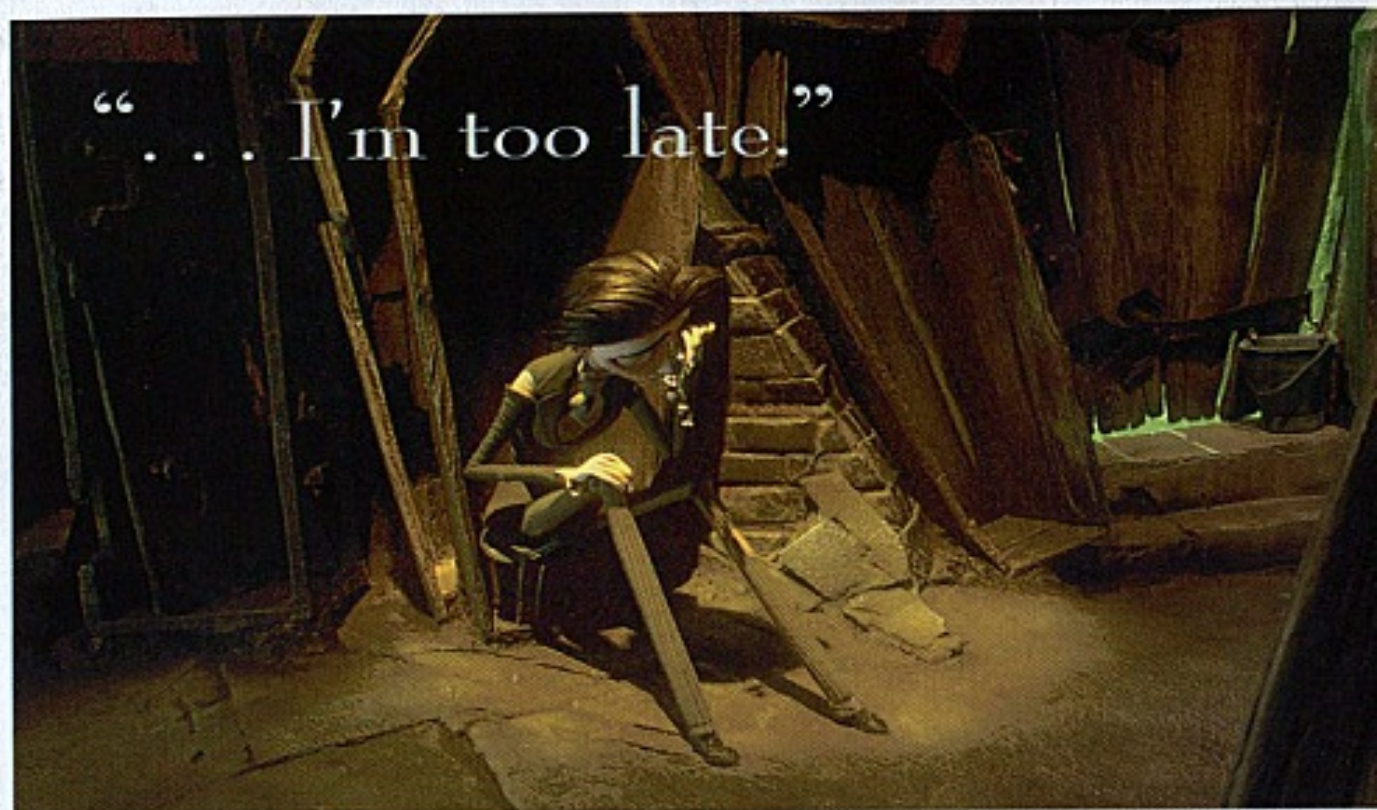


“Well, she

A T E D S T O R Y



's getting married this evening."





Elder puts the book down on the table and opens it to a page with ominous illustrations.

Elder Gutknecht: "There is a complication. . . with your marriage."

Corpse Bride: "I don't understand."

Elder Gutknecht: "The vows are binding only until death do you part."

Corpse Bride: "What are you saying?"

Elder Gutknecht: "Death has already parted you."

Victor stands just outside the door. He can't believe what he's hearing.

Corpse Bride: "If he finds out, he'll leave. There must be something you can do!"

She looks to Elder Gutknecht who hesitates, but soon grudgingly concedes.

Elder Gutknecht: "Well there is one way."

Elder Gutknecht: "But it requires the greatest sacrifice. Victor would have to give up the life he had, forever."

Elder turns the page of the book revealing an elaborate spell. In the center of the page is an ominous illustration of a vial with a skull and crossbones on it.

Elder Gutknecht: "He would need to repeat his vows in the Land of the Living—and drink from the *Wine of Ages*."



T H E I L L U S T R

“My boy, if you choose th
you may never return to th
above. Do you understa



A T E D S T O R Y

is path
the world
and?"





The Dead have gathered
climbs up onto the h

Victor: "Gather r
We've decided to do this thi
can and follow us. We're mo

Female zombie: "Upsta
upstairs."

Skeleton Boy: "Sounds

Skeleton Girl: "Let's go



ed around the statue. Victor
 horse and addresses the crowd.
 ound, gather round everybody!
 ing properly. So grab what you
 oving this wedding party upstairs.
 airs? I didn't know we had an

s creepy."
 o!"



T H E I L L U S T R

GROUP CHORUS

Wedding, a wedding, there's going to be a wedding. . .
a wedding.

BLACK WIDOW SPIDER

Hold on Victor.

GROUP CHORUS

Wedding, a wedding we're going to have a wedding. . .
a wedding.

BLACK WIDOW SPIDER

You can't get married looking like that!

SPIDER CHORUS

The spiders think you're very cute, but goodness knows
you need a suit

But have no fears, we're quite adept, we'll have you
looking lovely, lovely

Lovely, lovely, lovely, lovely, lovely yet.

A little stitch, a little tuck, some tender loving care.

A little thread will fix you up and we've got plenty
as you see,

And personally guarantee our quality repairs

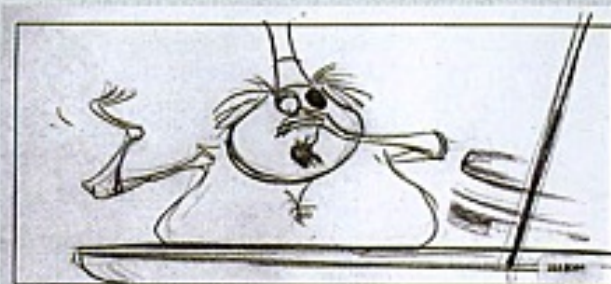
A little here, to fix the mess

We're going to do our very best.

When everybody sees you they will all be quite impressed.

They will all be quite impressed!

BELOW: Storyboards by Sharon Smith.



The

ZOMBIE

A wedding, we're going to have.

MRS PLU

. . . a wedding cake is no mistake

DEAD KITCHEN

We're missing something. . .

DEAD KITCHEN

—Try some dust

MRS PLU

. . . I wish I had more time. . .

DEAD KITCHEN

Perhaps there's something I can
help a bit

DEAD KITCHEN 1 (*his nose falls*)
My nose!

DEAD KITCHEN

Sorry

MRS PLU

Wait a minute. . . that's it!

A T E D S T O R Y

The Wedding Finale

ES
...
UM
e, it must be quite sublime.

N STAFF 2

N STAFF 1

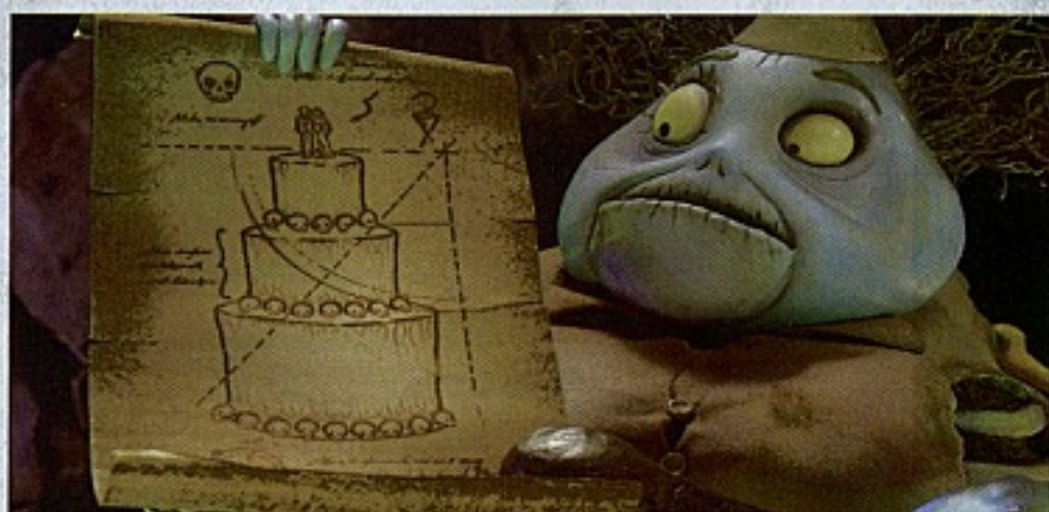
UM

HEN 2
do, these bones might

off)

HEN 2

UM



DEAD KITCHEN 1

A little that

DEAD KITCHEN 2

A little this

KITCHEN CHORUS

The perfect cake is hard to miss
A wedding, a wedding,
We're going to have a wedding.





"Huzah! Hurrah! Huzah!
Hurray! Our bride is
getting married today."



SOLDIER

Huzah! Hurray! Huzah! W
Hurray! A wedding, Hurra
Let's all give out a cheer ca
married today! Hurray
One thing you can surely
Until the end we will defe
Our bride to be,
Our bride to be,
Our lovely Corpse Bride
Huzah! Hurrah! Huzah! H
Our bride is getting marri

MISC

Here she comes. Oh look!

FEMALE

Ohhhh. . . the bride is her
She's waited for this day fo

B R I D E



WEDDING CHORUS

We're going to have a wedding,
 Today!
 Because the bride is getting
 Married!
 Today is we will stand beside.
 And our one and only bride.

For this day, for this day, our hopes and our pride.
 The bride is here, here comes the bride.
 For this day, for this day, will last forever
 And all of her friends, will work together
 To make it the perfect day, she's always dreamed
 Our hopes and our pride...
 ... our Bride, our lovely Bride.

GROUP CHORUS

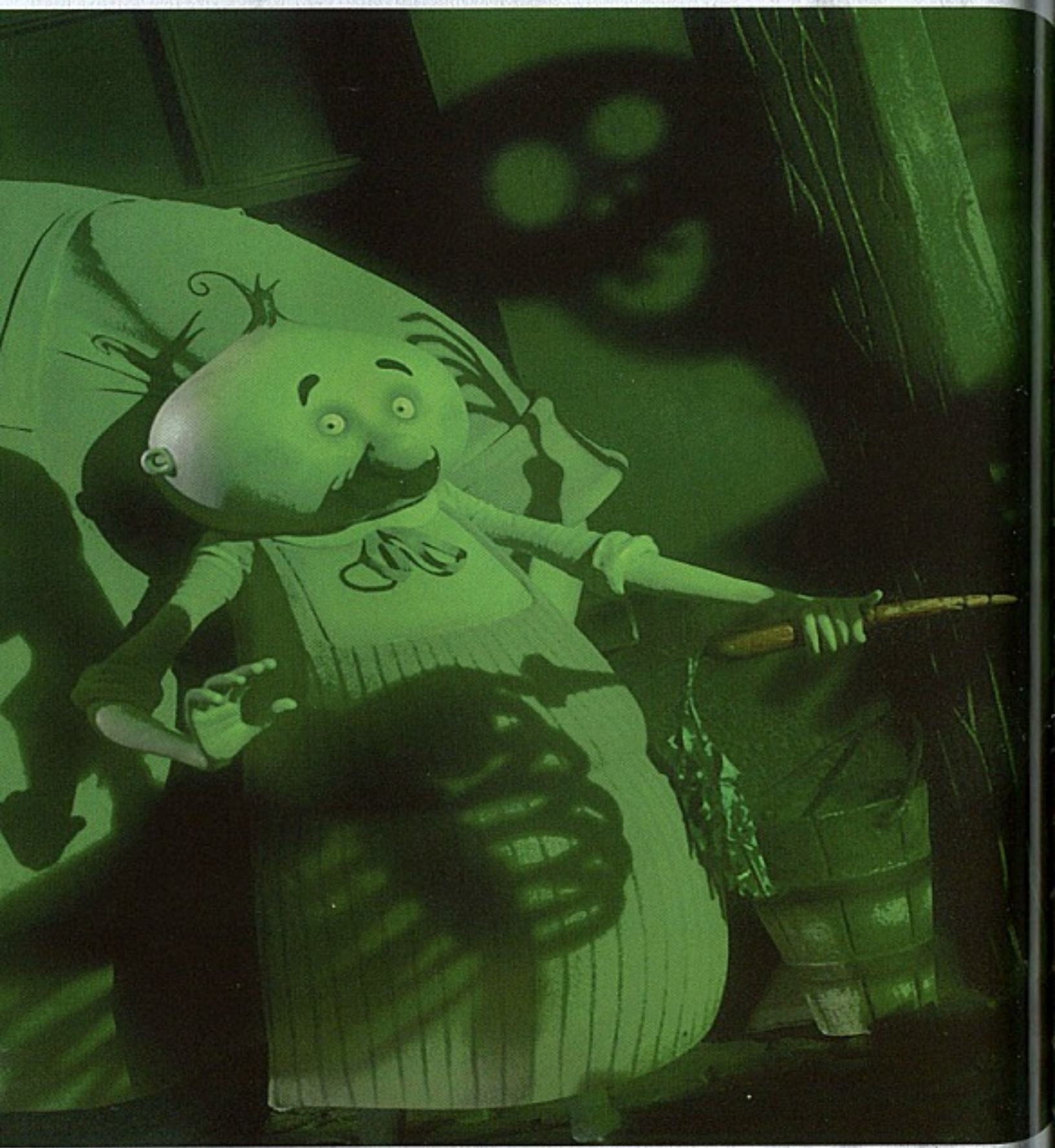
Hurray!
 Married today.
 THE CROWD
 It's her. ... oooh 'It's her!
 THE CHORUS
 Here
 For many a year.

We're going to have a party like no-one has ever seen,
 The Living in the land above will not know
 where they've been
 The land above. ...
 The party of. ...
 (Maggot cries)
 The Bride. ...
 Here comes the bride.
 On her glorious day of days,
 Up to the Land of the Living to celebrate.











Barkis Bittern stands, holding up his wine glass for a toast. Normally, he'd have to wait for the room to grow silent, but it's already library-quiet.

Barkis: "Quiet down now everyone. . . Thank you. . . Elegant, Cultured, Radiant... Victoria has found a husband with all these qualities and more. Serendipity brought us together, and no force on earth could tear us apart. . ."

Suddenly the lights go out and the hall is filled with an ominous green glow. The dinner guests look uneasily around for the cause of the disruption.

The hall is in chaos as the guests stumble over themselves trying to escape, unaware that the dead gate-crashers are merely trying to befriend their long-lost relatives and friends.



Victoria exits through the front steps, looking back over her shoulder.

It has been traumatic. Victoria and Living hold hands in a procession toward the church.

The crowd noisily joins in. Gutknecht and Victor stop to watch. Victoria makes her entrance preceded by a shower of sprinkling rose petals on the ground with pride and happiness.

She arrives at the altar.

A T E D S T O R Y



ugh the front door. She stops on the
ng into the village square beyond.
nsformed and is now full of Dead
ls and rejoicing, they are forming a
urch.

ams into the pews. Elder
and at the altar. Corpse Bride
eded by the skeleton girl and boy
her path. The Corpse Bride glows
s.

tar, and the ceremony commences.





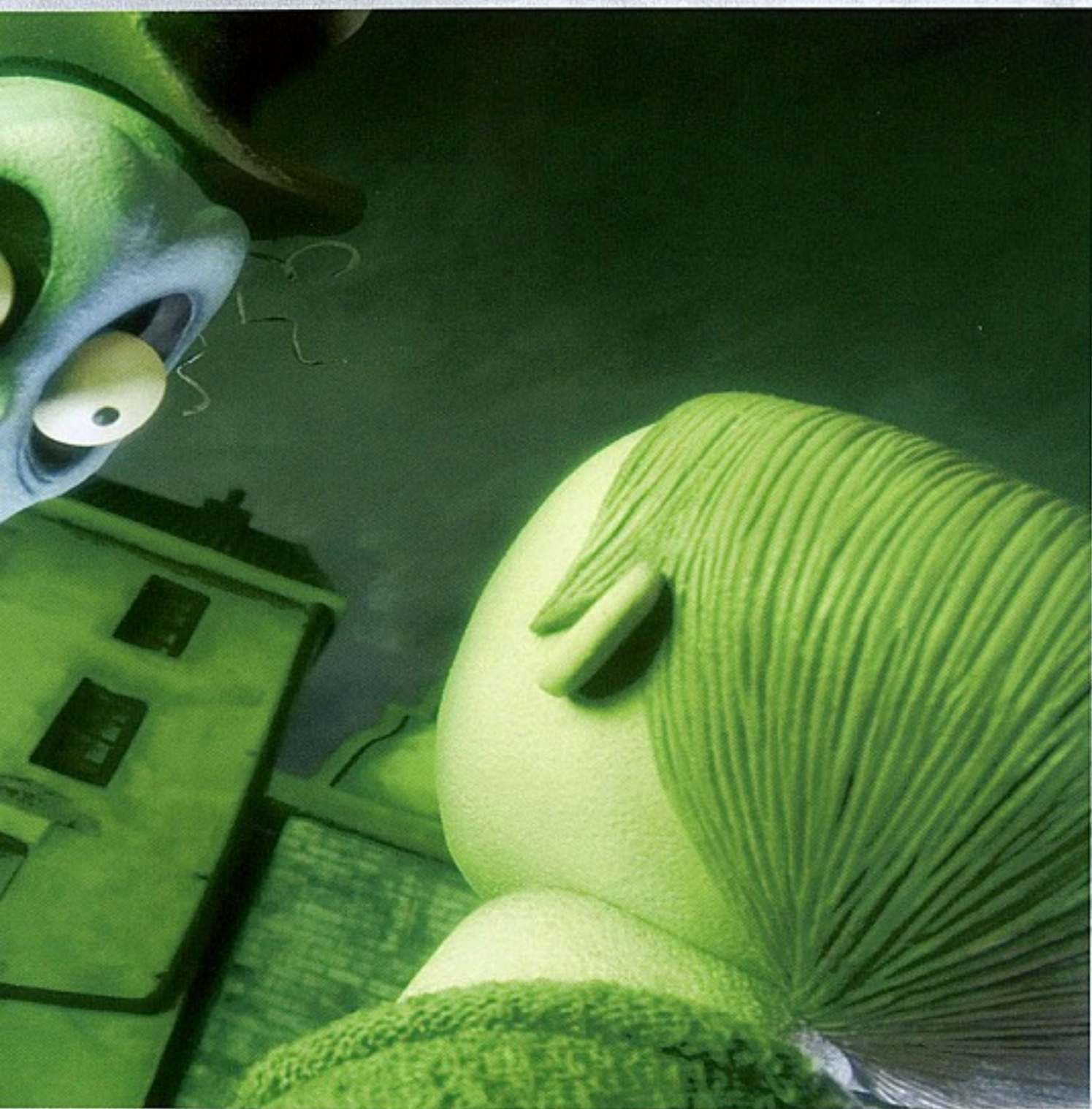
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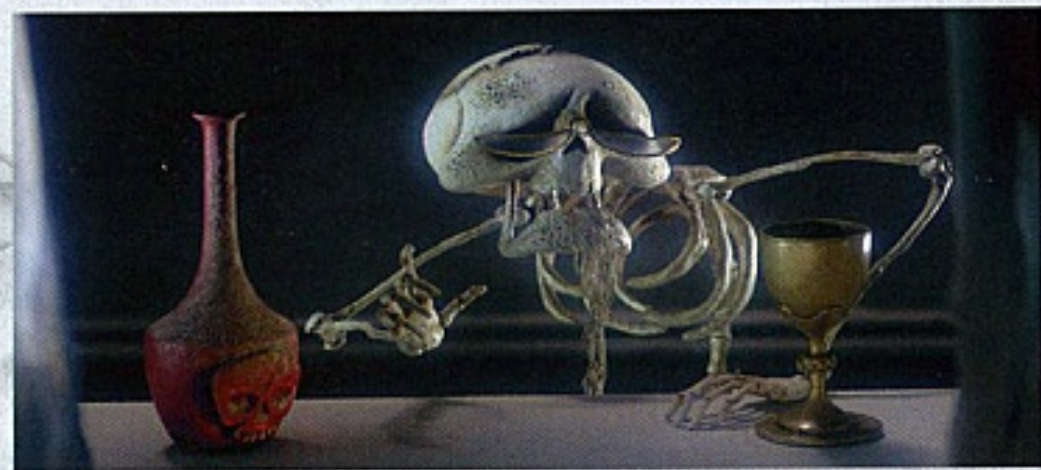


T H E I L L U S T R



A T E D S T O R Y





Elder Gutknecht: "Dearly beloved and departed, we are gathered here today to join this man and this corpse in marriage. . ."

Victoria arrives at the church and slowly ascends the steps to discover the ceremony midway through.

B R I D E



Barkis: "Our young lovers together at last, surely now they can live happily ever after. But you forget. . . She's still my wife! . . . And I shall not leave here empty handed!"

The Corpse Bride looks at his face distorted with anger and finally remembers what happened to her on her own wedding night so long ago.



“Wait! . . .
I made
a promise.”





“You kept your
promise — you
set me free. . .”

WARNER BROS. PICTURES Presents
A TIM BURTON/LAIKA ENTERTAINMENT
Production

JOHNNY DEPP
HELENA BONHAM CARTER
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TIM
BURTON'S
Corpse Bride

RICHARD E. GRANT
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Corpse Bride

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Nell Van Dort/Hildegard

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Paul The Head Waiter

Maudeline Everglot

Finis Everglot

Barkis Bittern

Pastor Galswells

Elder Gutknecht

Black Widow Spider/Mrs. Plum

Maggot/Town Crier

General Bonesapart

Bonejangles

Emil

Solemn Village Boy

CA

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 Lyrics by John August a
 Produced by Dan
 Performed by Albert Finn
 Tracey Ullman, and F

"Remains of t
 Music and Lyrics by
 Additional Lyrics by
 Produced by Dan
 Performed by Danny Elfr
 Paul Baker, Alison Jear

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o Plan"
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"Tannhauser: Pilgrim's Chorus"

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"Tara Theme"

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Made at 3 Mills Studios, London, England

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In memory of JOE RANFT

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Acknowledgments

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Writer Mark Salisbury (who would like to dedicate this book to Laura, Milo, and the amazing staff of the Neo Natal Unit, UCLH);

Designer Timothy Shaner;

And, of course, directors Tim Burton and Mike Johnson, along with their remarkable team pictured here.



B R I D E





ith an exclusive
text by Mark
filmmakers' and
Here is a true
than 250 daz

panion to the acclaimed f
Johnson that carries on th
Set in a 19th-century Euro
Victor (Johnny Depp), a y






ou
(E
in
Vic
ne
ro

This inspired volu
Burton's own drawings. C
character realization, set c
motion filming—all the w
the film's story in images



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Jacket Design by Timothy Shaner



ve foreword by Tim Burton and fascinating
Salisbury, this is a rich homage to the
artistry in the incomparable *Corpse Bride*.
collector's dream book, featuring more
ling illustrations, a stunning visual com-
film from directors Tim Burton and Mike
the dark, romantic tradition of the classic *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.
European village, this stop-motion, animated feature follows the story of
young man who is whisked away to the underworld and wed to a mysteri-
s Corpse Bride (Helena Bonham-Carter), while his real bride, Victoria
family Watson), waits bereft in the land of the living. Though life
the Land of the Dead proves to be a lot more colorful than his strict
Victorian upbringing, Victor learns that there is nothing in this world, or the
xt, that can keep him away from his one true love. It's a tale of optimism,
nance, and a very lively afterlife, told in a classic Tim Burton style.
me showcases spectacular movie stills, sketches, paintings, and Tim
covering pre-production, production, and post-production, sections detail
development and construction, puppet fabrication, costuming, and stop-
wonderful intricacies of the elaborate process. The book's final part retells
with synopsis, storyboards, and lyrics.

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